

RCN Beach Commando “W”

Part II Off-the-record anecdotal “portholes”.

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APPENDICES

PORTHOLE #1





Graduation Day -- HMCS Kings -- May 22, 1942

PORTHOLE #1 **Three of a Kind**

How vividly do I remember Saturday, May 22, 1942 -- graduation-day for "U" Division's thirty Probationary sub-lieutenants at HMCS Kings in Halifax. With the traditional discarding of their white cap-covers in celebration of successfully completing the sixteen-week training course, these youthful naval officers, after bidding farewell to their shipmates, set course to take up their respective first appointments.

Finding myself at loose ends on graduation-day morning and realizing that my sea-appointment might well diminish future shopping opportunities, I ventured downtown to buy a few personal toilet articles and returned before lunch to our four-man cabin dormitory. Here my lower bunk-mate, Donald Dodds, seemed both surprised and amused to see a Remington electric razor among my purchases, because from the beginning of our course in January I had received continuous ridicule for only having to shave "once in a while".

During the afternoon graduation ceremony, with Commander A.M. Hope RCN, (C.O., HMCS Kings) at the helm and aided by Captain C.R.H. Taylor, RCN (N.O.I.C., Halifax) and The Hon. A.L. Macdonald (Minister of National Defence for Naval Services), Jim Mainguy was honoured for attaining the highest all-round standing in our Division. A completely unexpected event then occurred when I was awarded the "most officer-like qualities" prize which, much to the amusement of my shipmates, turned out to be a Sunbeam electric razor!!



Look Sharp! Be Sharp! Feel Sharp!

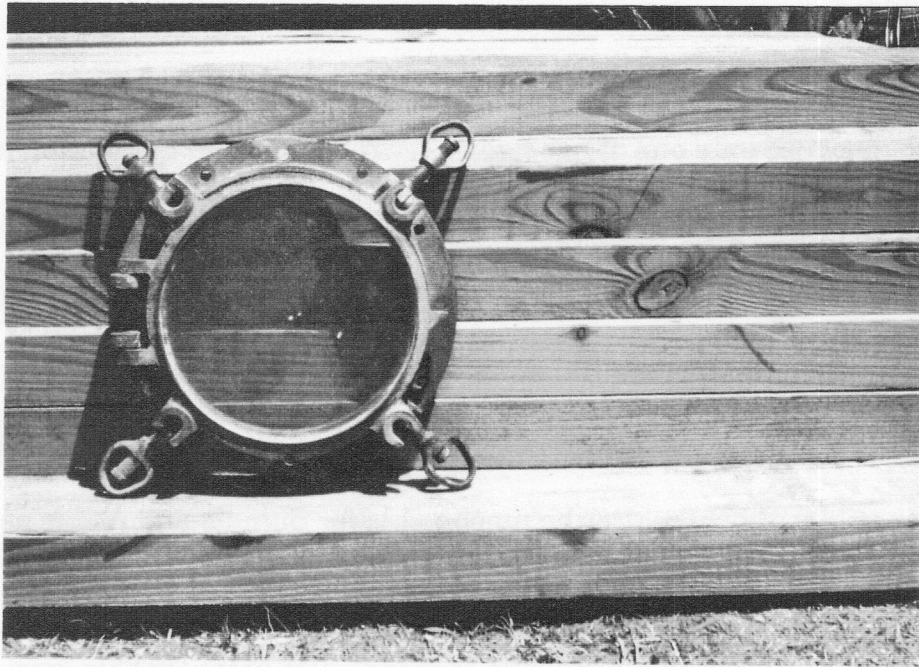
Use Gillette Blue Blades

With the Sharpest Edges Ever Honed

A few hours later, as I was finishing packing, the mail-office called to say a parcel had just arrived for me. From my RCAF brother Hartland, then a pilot instructor at Summerside, I became the recipient of --- a Schick electric razor!!!

(This razor affair always reminds me of the American comedian Bob Hope's story about visiting a military hospital. He stopped at the bedside of a patient whose face, except for two tiny eye-holes and a mouth-slit, was completely covered with bandages. "Gosh", the comedian asked, "how do you manage to shave?". "Why, Bob", came the reply, "I've had my close shave".)

PORTHOLE #2



PORTHOLE #2 **Planting the Seed**

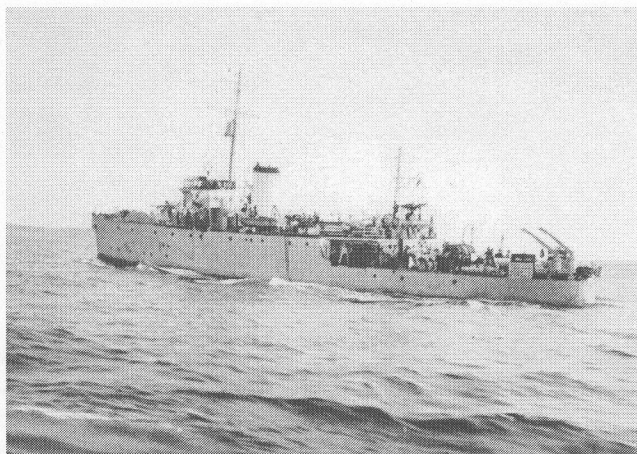
Marking my first appointment to a sea-going ship in World War II, May 24, 1942 proved to be a critical date in my naval career. By shedding our white cap-covers on the previous day, I and thirty other Probationary Sub-Lieutenants had graduated as members of "U" Division from the four-month RCNVR officer training course at HMCS Kings in Halifax.

Now it was off to Pictou to joint a Bangor-Class minesweeper, HMCS Swift Current which, because only one of her two boilers ever seemed to function at any given time, the crew had renamed Slow Dribble. With RN submarine P-512 acting as "enemy" and working in tandem with the corvette HMCS Kamloops, our mission entailed training *asdic ratings to operate the submarine-detection equipment.

Towards the end of my first week, the Captain (Lt. (n) Ian H. Bell, RCNVR) informed me that I would thereafter be responsible for Signals and Asdic, as well as the ship's canteen, duties previously carried out by S/Lt. Harry Trenholme. The latter, who had volunteered for Combined Operations overseas, left Slow Dribble soon afterwards and subsequently saw action with landing craft in the 1943 North African and 1944 Normandy campaigns.

After discussing the subject at length with Harry prior to his departure, I decided then and there that if one day the opportunity presented itself to serve overseas in Combined Operations, I too would volunteer.

*Asdic is an acronym for Anti-Submarine Defence Investigation Committee. (The Encyclopedia Americana (1952), Canadian Edition, vol.28, p.723)



HMCS "Slow Dribble", J-254, 1942



The Sower



Combined Operations
Badge

(see next page)

COMBINED OPERATIONS BADGE

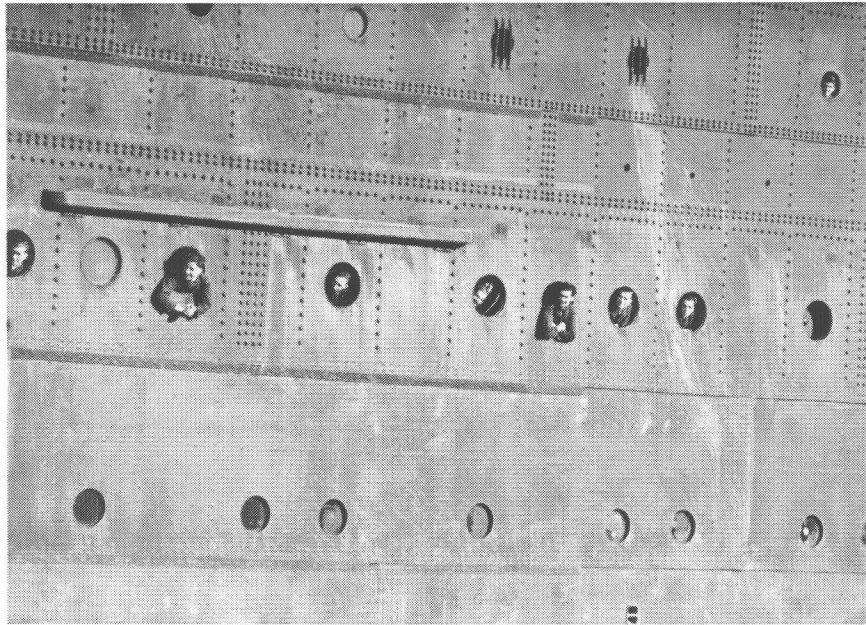
On January 13, 1942 Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Chief of the Combined Operations Command, issued a general invitation for a badge design. Some five weeks later he selected that which appears on the preceding page, being a variation of one of several submitted by Lt. D.A. Grant, RNVR, of HMS Tormentor, Combined Operation Command's principal landing craft training base near Southampton.

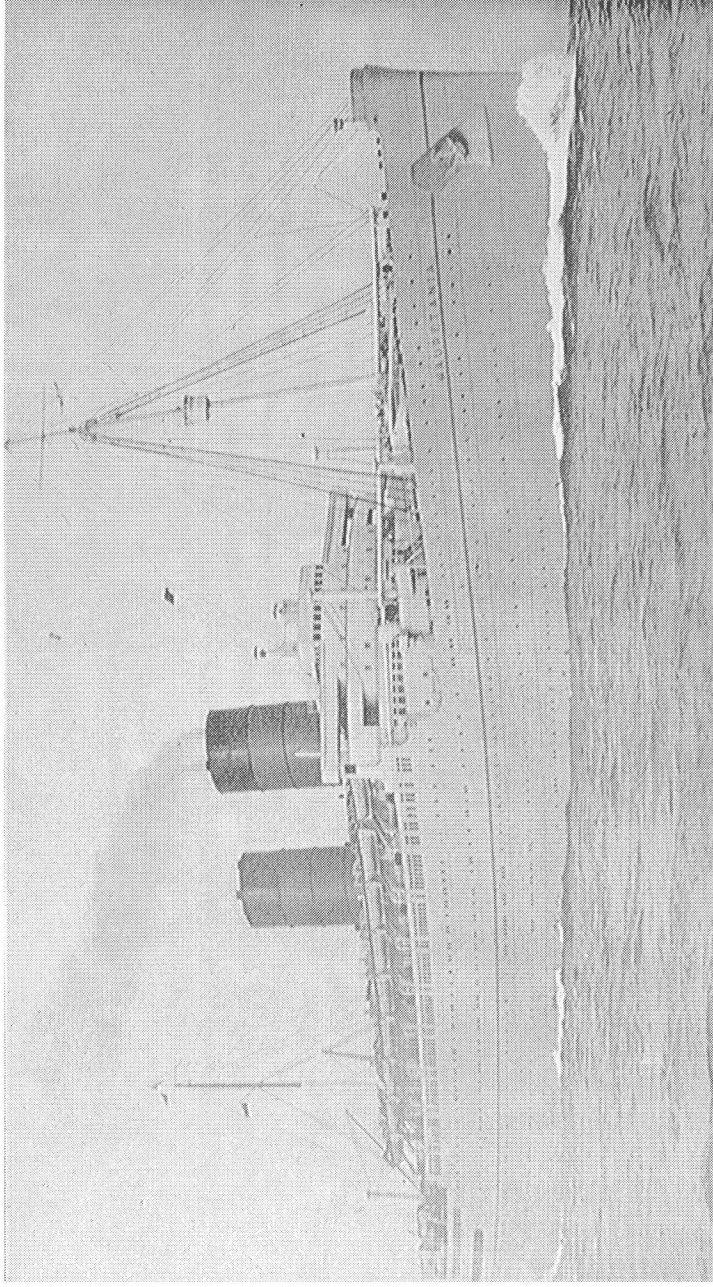
The badge, as described by Mountbatten, consisted of a 'Tommy' gun, an eagle and a stockless anchor, representing the Army, the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy. On July 4 authority was granted for its issue and before the end of the month the first order of badges for the Royal Navy was placed. with general distribution proceeding in August. Although on September 2 the Americans requested a supply of the official badge, some of their combined operations units chose to wear either variations or different badges altogether.

On June 17, 1946 C.O.H.Q. declared that "the use of the Combined Operations badge is to be discontinued with effect from 1 July 1946". In 1948 the badge was reintroduced with effect from 1 June.

N.E. The foregoing statement is taken from Terry Carney's article "THE COMBINED OPERATIONS BADGE, 1942-1946", which appeared in The Formation Sign, The Journal of the Military Heraldry Society, No 168 Oct-Dec 1992

PORTHOLE #3





HMT Mauretania (1939-65) in cruising colours

PORTHOLE #3 **Medic Mo**

After enjoying embarkation leave from November 1-22, 1943 at home in Montreal, which followed my appointment as one of the three officers in charge of "KK" Division's ninety-odd Probationary sub-lieutenants who had just recently graduated from HMCS Kings, I returned to an East Coast Canadian port and boarded HM troopship Mauretania for passage to UK and service with Canadian Combined Operations forces. Thus was I carrying out the decision made eighteen months earlier upon relieving S/Lt. Trenholme in HMCS Swift Current.

HMT Mauretania, built originally as a Cunard ocean-liner in Birkenhead, England between 1937 and 1939, was subsequently converted into a troop transport in Sydney, Australia. Designed with about a thousand berths, during World War II she frequently accommodated several thousand "passengers" at a time. But as I mounted her gangway on that raw November 25th Thursday morning, my thoughts were doubtlessly not on accommodation. Adrenalin, however, was flowing like a tidal wave. At the ship's entrance port, I handed my boarding-pass to a military official and kept moving slowly inboard, expecting to be advised in short order of the location of my "state room". After what seemed ages, he announced simply: "Lt. Finley, your name does not seem to be on the passenger list. We'll check it again presently." At this point I stepped aside to permit an endless stream of embarkees behind me to check in and receive their accommodation allocation. When recheck revealed that my name was indeed not listed, but after the naval authorities had at least validated my boarding-pass, I set out on a recce of the ship to find an available place to stow my gear and lay my head. Finally,



(on right)
RCAMC Capt. C. Miller Ballem,
alias "Medic Mo",
in Antwerp, September 1944

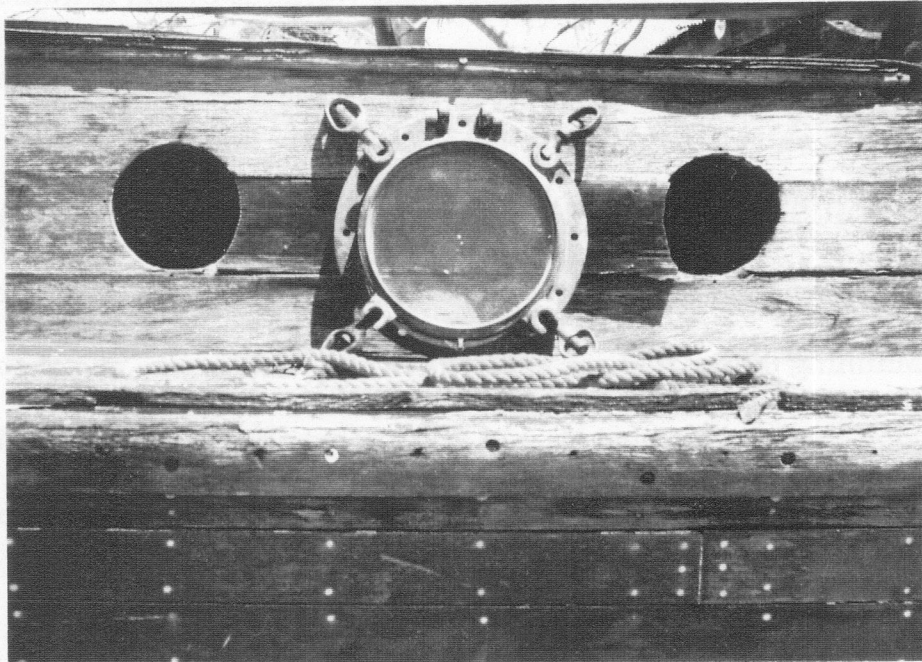
in what can only be described as steerage quarters, I happened upon a four-bunk "state-room" occupied by three RCAMC captains. Upon learning that the fourth bunk was originally assigned to another medic, who yesterday had received revised draft orders, I immediately started trying to convince my potential cabin-mates of the desirability of having a matelot close at hand during the forthcoming trans-Atlantic voyage. So it was, without having to invoke my Senior Service prerogative, that I managed to find suitable "digs".

Whereas the week-long crossing itself proved uneventful as far as encountering the enemy was concerned, a number of not insignificant happenings occurred in relation to our foursome and particularly between two of us -- me and Dr. C. Miller Ballem, nicknamed Mo. To begin with the weather turned nasty as soon as we passed out between the gate-vessels at the entrance to Halifax harbour, and seasickness took possession of Mo and his two chums. Over the ensuing three days and nine meals, the medical trio relied upon me to bring them nourishment which, I must admit, was never accompanied by much sympathy! All the time I wondered why the various anti-mal-de-mer medicines consumed by each of them provided so little relief -- probably because they were taken too late or simply because virtually nothing they swallowed stayed down!

By the fourth day the weather improved and, having acquired our sea legs, the four of us enjoyed a game of quoits on the promenade deck and a full-course meal in the dining saloon. We all agreed that, yes, it was good to be alive again! But alas, one speaketh too soon, for my joy was to be short-lived. Within twelve hours of these two

joyful diversions, I landed up in sick-bay with a "strep" throat and sky-high temperature. Apart from showing casual concern about my over-all physical condition, the three doctors (led by Mo) lost little time in paying me back for the ridicule and insults which I had heaped upon them earlier in the voyage. Two days later, when we docked in Liverpool, I was still confined to sick-bay and my three cabin-mates began spreading rumours around that I would be shipped back to Canada. However, after they and all the "passengers" had disembarked, I inveigled the Sick-Bay Attendant into collecting my belongings from our steerage cabin; and later, under cover of darkness, I managed to navigate the gangway and skip ashore on that bitterly cold evening. How Medic Mo and his two companions would have laughed to see me on board the night-train from Liverpool to London, curled up snake-like on a four-foot square luggage rack, with a greatcoat for a blanket and a naval cap for a pillow.

PORTHOLE #4



PORTHOLE #4 **Switching Appointments**

As already mentioned in PORTHOLE #1, the idea of serving with Combined Operations first occurred to me during the summer of 1942 when, as a freshly graduated sub-lieutenant, I took up my first sea-going assignment in HMCS Swift Current. Then in September I headed inland for the Hunter Boat Works at Orillia to await completion of HMCM/L Q-092, a fairmile. Just before freeze-up we arrived in Halifax to undertake "loop patrol" duties outside the harbour gate-vessels. By mid-winter I had transferred to the corvette HMCS Shawinigan which was engaged at the time as a convoy escort on the Halifax/St. John's/New York "triangle" run. Six months afterwards HMCS Stadacona's Manning officer told me to report to HMCS Kings as one of three officers for "KK" Division, a ninety-member class of Probationary Sub-Lieutenants. The day was now rapidly approaching when I would volunteer to serve overseas with Combined Operations, being a decision made well over a year ago.

While Bill Benson, John Bird, and I were escorting the three respective sections of "KK" Division through their sixteen-week officer-training course from mid-July to November 1943, the Canadian Government was making commitments which would soon affect my future career. On September 8, as a result of the "Quadrant" conference of Allied leaders held the previous month in Quebec City, Canada's Cabinet War Committee approved the two following British Admiralty proposals:

1. RCN to form a Canadian squadron of three landing craft flotillas (approximately 350 men).
2. RCN to form a Canadian Beach Commando and a Canadian Beach Signals Unit (approximately 1,000 men).

In both cases training would take place in Britain and be completed by the Spring of 1944.

Early the next month, with "KK" Division graduation-day only three weeks away, I called on the Manning Officer and volunteered my services with respect to these proposals. Then, having passed a rather stiff medical examination shortly afterwards, I found my name under the Combined Operations (U.K.) section of the October 21 Daily List of Appointments (#218/43). Four days later but unbeknown to me at the time, a memorandum from the Naval Board at Ottawa to RCN Headquarters in London indicated I would constitute one of twelve required First Lieutenants for the 1st Canadian LCI(L) flotilla.

After fulfilling my responsibilities in connection with "KK" Division's graduation, I proceeded home early in November to Montreal on embarkation leave and to await notification of departure date and time.

On Thursday morning, November 25, 1943, sixteen RCNVR officers boarded HMT Mauretania in Halifax for passage to UK and Combined Operations, with ten appointed to the Canadian Beach Commando and the remaining six to the Canadian landing craft flotillas. But even as our trooper was soon speeding along at around twenty knots for its scheduled December 1 Liverpool arrival, the Personnel staff at Canada's naval headquarters in London were apparently switching two of the above-noted appointments. In a "memo-to-file", dated November 29, the Staff Officer (Combined Operations) pencilled out the name of O.H. Rumpel on the list of "Beach Party Officers" and substituted that of E.G. Finley. Likewise, on the list of "Officers for Canadian

29th November, 1943.

MEMORANDUM

OFFICERS FOR CANADIAN COMBINED OPERATIONS

Beach Party Officers as follows:-

Lieut. Cdr. Wm. M. MacDonald
Lieutenant J. Bentley
" L.O. Campbell
" R.J. Johnstone
" A.D. Rayburn
" C. Hatch
Sub-Lieut. ~~G.H. Rumpel~~ *E.G. Finley*
" K.G. Crowhurst
" R.I. Shales
" F. Angus
" G.V.G. Bain

This comprises
the full 2-page,
29th November, 1943
MEMORANDUM
initialled by "WSB"
(Lt. W.S. Brooke),
Staff Officer
in charge of
Combined Operations
under SCNO(L)

are to report to H.M.S. "Armadillo" Sunday 5th December. They will proceed to "Armadillo", which is a remote base on the shores of Loch Long, from either Greenock or Gourock and arrangements are being made through "Armadillo" and perhaps "Niobe" to handle the party. Between arrival in the U.K. and reporting to "Armadillo", Beach Party Officers are to proceed to London, report to Staff Officer (~~Patterson~~), King's House, 10 Haymarket, and complete necessary records required by him. While in London it is hoped to give them some background of Canadian Combined Operations but this will only take part of their time, the rest of their time will be available for sight-seeing, etc. Officers will have to take their gear with them to London and back again to Scotland, they should leave their heavy gear at the railway station in London. On their trip north they will arrive presumably at St. Enoch's Station, Glasgow and will have to move their luggage to Central Station, Glasgow, to get a Gourock train, here again all gear should be taken with them right through.

SBP from Officers for Canadian L.C.I.(L)'s consisting of:-

Lieutenant N.W. Gooderham
Sub-Lieut. J.F. Lynn
" ✓ D.A. Moon
" J.A. McCarthy
" ~~E.G. Finley~~ *at Rumpel*
" ✓ J.A. Patterson
" ✓ W.G. Pringle
" ✓ R.J.G. Ritchie
" ✓ L.E. Simpson
" ✓ A.G. Carlisle

are to proceed forthwith to Troon, Ayrshire, by way of Kilmarnock. At Troon they are to report to Lieut. H. Doherty, RCNVR, c/o Captain H.L.C. and if overnight accommodation is required will probably be accommodated in "Landside House". These Officers, or nine of them, as 1st Lieutenants will be put in charge of their crews and will have to take the crews to join their ships. They leave Troon Friday, 3rd December, and are due to join their ships Saturday, 4th December, and commission on that day, thereafter they will remain with their ships in the normal way. Information as to location of ships and Commanding Officers will be furnished at Troon. Officers are reminded that they should take all their gear with them as it is almost impossible to count on gear following along safely. It would appear that the train to Kilmarnock leaves Liverpool Lime Street Station about 2245 and arrives Kilmarnock about 0600 next morning, from there, though the same station, take another train to Troon about 20 minutes or so later. If they wish Officers may leave their heavy luggage at the Troon railway station.

W 2/11

Reference:

PAC, RG-24, Vol. 11,720,
file 33-17-1, v.1

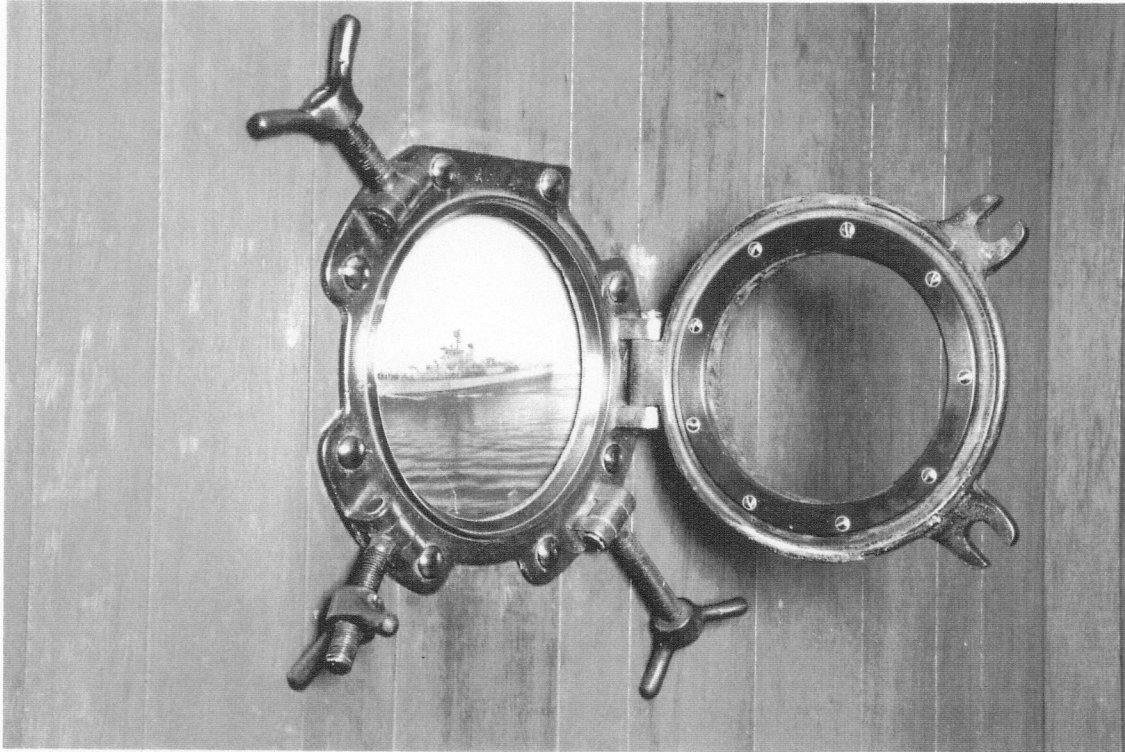
LCI(L)s", O.H. Rumpel's name is substituted for E.G Finley's. Regarding these switches, for which no additional official documentation has been found, I personally cannot recall whether my original appointment was to landing craft or to beach commandos. The only other clue appears in the following sentence of my December 10 letter to Mother: "I switched appointments at the last second (five mins. to be exact) & so headed for London."

A similar instance of appointment switching happened after we arrived in England to two of the other RCNVR officers who had boarded the Mauretania on that November morning. By mid-December G.V.C. Baum, who was originally assigned to the Beach Commando on October 21, had replaced J.K. Macbeth in landing craft and eventually became Signal Officer for the 3rd Canadian LCI(L) flotilla. Macbeth, meanwhile, after completing a long "n" (viz navigation) course the previous summer, had been appointed in October as Assistant Squadron Officer for the three LCI(L) flotillas. To grant his December request for transfer to beach commandos, the appropriate RCN personnel authorities apparently simply switched his and Baum's October appointments.

While no official documentation has thus far been found which shows conclusively why or by whom either the Rumpel/Finley or Baum/Macbeth appointment switches were effected, it is only due to the Rumpel/Finley switch that any of these PORTHOLES came to be written at all, because Rumpel*, after surviving the Normandy landings as First Lieutenant in LCI(L) #166, subsequently lost his life on March 18, 1945 when his ship, HMCS Guysborough, was sunk by U-868 in the Bay of Biscay.

*Although able to recall quite clearly spending a couple of pre-war summers with Oscar Rumpel at an Ontario boy's camp on Canoe Lake in Ontario, I do not think that our paths ever again crossed.

PORTHOLE #5



PORTHOLE #5 **Rocking the Boat**

a) Benghazi Bill's Bitch

By December 6, 1943, a dozen RCNVR officers and some seventy Canadian naval ratings had assembled in HMS Armadillo (a Royal Navy Combined Operations base at Ardentinnny on Loch Long) to undergo several weeks of specialized training as RCN Beach Commando "W". In a February 5, 1990 letter to the author, "W"'s Deputy Principal Beachmaster and Commanding Officer, R.J. Johnstone, describes the officers' arrival thusly:

I can recall vividly our reception as we disembarked from a lighter to the strains of "O Canada", sweetly played by a Marine band, and the gracious participation of Armadillo's C.O. in the welcoming ceremony.

Cdr. E. A. Davis, RN (Commanding Officer of the base at the time and known to his staff as "Uncle Eric") soon became nicknamed "Benghazi Bill" when we learned that he had served around Tripoli on warships which participated in Operation "TORCH"'s North African landings. According to Lt. Cdr. D. MacArthur, RNVR, HMS Armadillo's 1943-45 Training Officer, not only did Davis know nothing about beach commandos upon his appointment as C.O. in December 1942, but he held out for several months before deciding to shed his pusser blue uniform and wear khaki battle-dress -- the Combined Operations "rig of the day".

(The following anecdote is taken from W-1 Beachmaster Lt. Sutherland's 12 December 1990 letter to the author.)

The Captain was a great dog fancier and particularly proud of his purebred Springer Spaniel bitch. He was occasionally to be seen walking this dog which he guarded and cosseted [sic] with all the concern of a professional kennel man. "W" Commando was sent on a long hike over the shoulder of Creachan Mor the big mountain behind ARMADILLO to Carrick Castle on Loch Goil. In the course of this bivouac "W" Commando adopted a mongrel cur, or perhaps the stray dog adopted the Canadians, who is to say? In any event they brought the mongrel back to ARMADILLO with them with the intention of mating it with the Captain's Springer Spaniel at that moment conveniently in heat. Somehow this mischievous stud activity was arranged, but unfortunately not without it coming to the attention of Commander Davis whose reaction was understandably one of fury and outrage. Of course there was hell to pay which consisted of "W" Commando being confined to barracks for a week, a punishment which because of the extreme isolation of HMS ARMADILLO was really no punishment at all. The only good thing to be said about this occurrence is that mercifully the mongrel failed to impregnate the Springer Spaniel bitch. It should be added that this action was the beginning of "W" commando's unfortunate reputation for mischief and deviltry.

A variation on this theme is given by "W" Commando's C.O., Lt. Cdr. Johnstone, who writes as follows in his Feb. 5, 1990 letter to the author:

I can clearly recall, too, the wardroom skit performed by yourself and MacBeth honoring the "betrothal" of a shy spaniel bitch. The sedately comic epithalamium even brought a smile to the normally staid features of Benghazi Bill, proud owner of the pooch.

"Nelson", W's Mongrel Mutt,
takes Centre Stage during Route-March Rest



"Benghazi Bill" (front centre),
his Training Staff and Springer Spaniel "Sheila"

PORTHOLE #5 **Rocking the Boat**

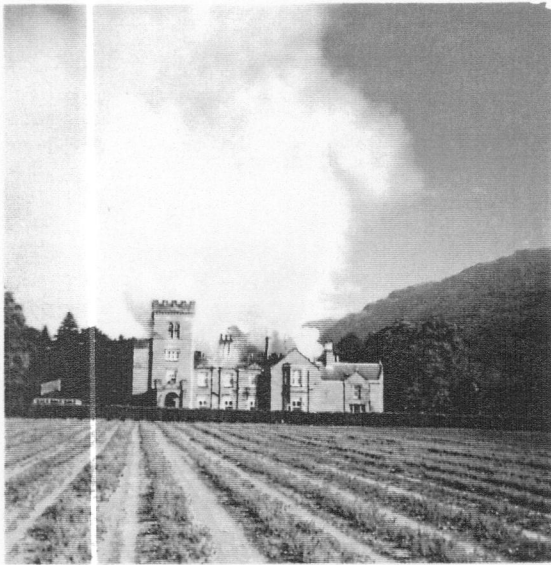
b) Bangalore Bentley's Bomb

Soon after his return to Ardentinnny from an "Explosives & Demolitions" course in HMS Volcano, Lt. Bentley, "W" Commando's Administrative and Stores Officer, became the terror of one and all. His fellow officers dared not even pick up a boot for fear it had been booby-trapped by their usually sedate colleague whom they forthwith nicknamed "Bangalore" Bentley.

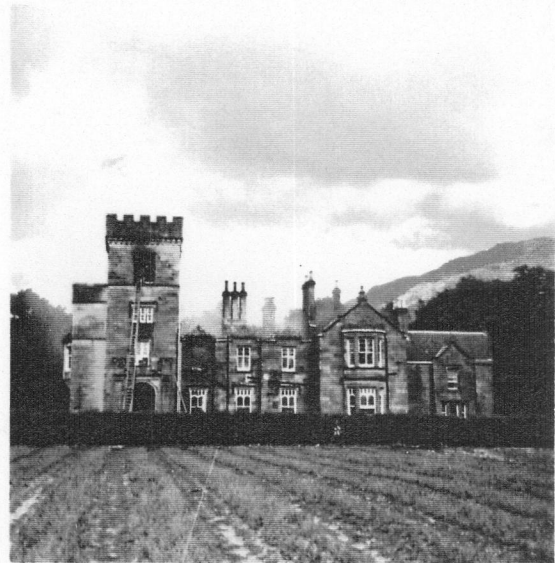
As long as these pranks affected or involved only officers undergoing training at the time, they were taken in good spirit and simply accepted as a matter of course. But as W-1 Beachmaster Lt. Sutherland recalls in his 12 December 1990 letter to the author, a different view and consequence resulted when one particular antic affected Benghazi Bill, HMS Armadillo's Commanding Officer:

Now the Captain's quarters at ARMADILLO were immediately above the Wardroom. In both the Wardroom and the Captain's cabin the fireplaces were kept going for warmth and cheer throughout the cold, dark winter evenings of 1943-4. One evening when the Anteroom was filled with officers enjoying the conviviality of a pre-prandial drink "Bangalore" Bentley contrived to slip a "thunder-flash" into the Wardroom fireplace. There was a very loud report followed by a cloud of smoke and a noisy uproar. Unknown to Bentley the Wardroom and the Captain's cabin shared a chimney flue. Not only did the Captain's cabin share the loud report, but worse still, it was enveloped in an impenetrable black cloud of greasy smoke and soot, the accumulation of many months of log fires. As some of the officers of "U" and "V" Commandos were also present in the ARMADILLO anteroom on this occasion responsibility for this smoke bomb attack on the Captain could not be pinned exclusively on "W" Commando. So bar privileges for all officers were cut off for forty-eight hours. These two episodes in HMS ARMADILLO [the first is described in PORTHOLE #5a)] initiated the unfortunate reputation acquired by "W" Commando as a bunch of Canadian hooligans, yahoos and bad hats.

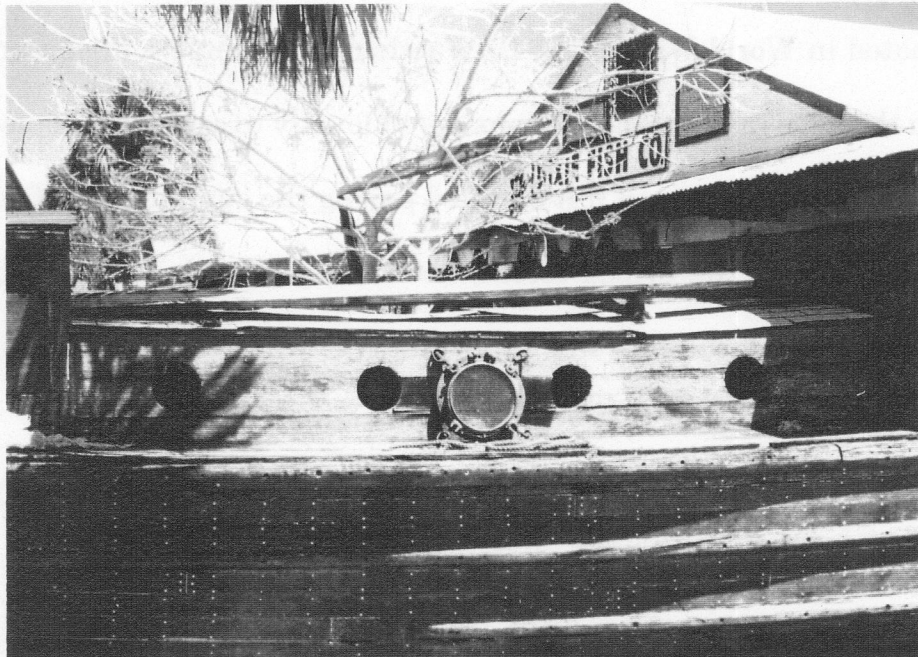
"Bangalore" Bentley's worst fear



Mr. Lees, a nearby resident and ex-RN officer, took these snapshots of the fire which gutted Glenfinart House in the 1960s.



PORTHOLE #6



PORTHOLE #6 **Calling our Bluff**

Surely one of the most tragic results of each and every war throughout the course of human history has to be the number of youth who become casualties -- either killed or disabled. Several million would be a rough but not unreasonable estimate of deaths alone to the under twenty-five year-olds serving in the armed forces of countries which participated in World Wars I and II. Whether as volunteers or conscripts, youth down through the ages in general have considered loyalty to country or cause as high priority or moral responsibility even if it entailed paying the supreme sacrifice. Whatever their motive for joining the armed forces, however, youth also invariably demonstrate a certain degree of impatience when they undergo what seems as repetitive training and endless waiting before actually "going into action".

After some ten weeks' initial training at HMS Armadillo in Scotland, RCN Beach Commando "W" moved to HMS Mastodon at Exbury in mid-February 1944. Even while in Scotland signs of discontent had shown up among both officers and ratings for a variety of reasons -- e.g. dismissal of the original PBM, terrible winter weather, minor flue epidemic, desolateness of location, and seemingly general disorganization. Letters home and diary entries on the eve of our departure for southern England mention "the troops and us getting restless" and "almost all officers downhearted and pretty fed up."

Ten days after taking up residence at Inchmery House in the New Forest on February 17, I wrote these words in a letter home:

To-day for the 1st time there was ill-feeling among our officers, and together with what we were told at an inspection this a.m., it looks as tho' our unit might split up. It's difficult to make this all add up, but I can't help feeling that we've waisted [sic] an awful lot of time, experience, training, & men, if they don't use us now.

The letter went on to indicate that in view of a possible split-up Jack Macbeth (ABM in W-3) and I planned to visit the Canadian Navy's Personnel Officer in London within a fortnight.

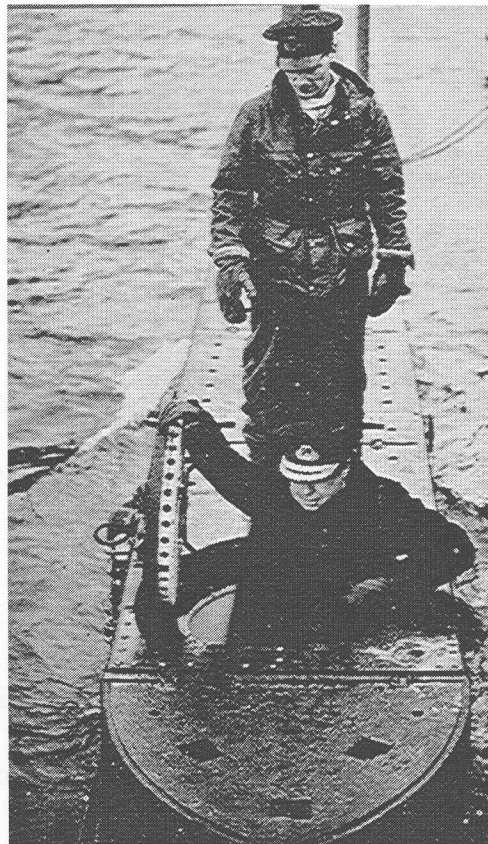
Throughout the month of March, even as we were busily and not unhappily preoccupied in taking various short-term specialized courses, Macbeth and I actively considered transferring out of Combined Operations and back into General Service -- MTBs and midget submarines being two of the choices contemplated. But since no such openings were forthcoming by our self-imposed March 31 deadline, it was decided to enter the lion's den.

Accordingly on Sunday, April 2, following Morning Divisions and still wearing Number 5's we set off on bicycles from Exbury to visit Rear-Admiral C.B. Barry, DSO, RN, at his home ten miles away in Beaulieu. At the time he was Flag Officer, Submarines at the Admiralty and was reportedly on weekend leave. Upon arriving an hour or so later at the picket-fence gate in front of his cottage, Jack spotted a man in work clothes kneeling beside the flower beds and managed to attract his attention. "Excuse me, Mate," Jack began, "But would you happen to know if the Admiral's aboard?"

Macbeth & Finley
setting sail



Admiral Barry, RN
goes down the hatch
into an X-Craft
Midget
Submarine



After what seemed several minutes, a reply finally broke the silence: "Not sure, but I'll go and enquire for you -- and whom will I say is calling?" We answered in concert: "A couple of Canadian naval officers." Thereupon the man slowly stood up and headed off towards the rear of the house.

Again an eternity passed but eventually the front door of the cottage opened and who should appear, or reappear, but our supposed gardener, only this time attired as a rear-admiral!! Jack and I immediately donned caps, sprang smartly to attention, and executed the most "pusser" salutes of our respective three-year-young naval careers. Fortunately for us formality was only short-lived. Even before introductions began, Admiral Barry had removed both his "brass" hat and jacket, and in short order the three of us were comfortably seated in his living-room enjoying a cup of tea served graciously by Mrs. Barry.

When called upon Jack and I indicated that the purpose of our visit was to enquire from our host about the possibility of and procedure for transferring from the Canadian beach commandos to RN submarines. After describing briefly a submariner's life, noting our names, telling us how to go about making official application, and without committing himself in any way, the rear-admiral saw us to the door and wished us bon voyage. Stopping off for lunch at a pub en route back to Exbury, we congratulated each other for what had been an encouraging first step in leaving beach commandos.

Scarcely had we stowed our bicycles in the storeroom of Inchmery House around mid-afternoon than Ken Crowhurst, my "W-2" assistant beachmaster colleague, came running up to us: "Hey, you guys," he began, "where've ya been? There's plenty o'gossip goin' 'round that yer both in for it." We confided in him where we'd been and what had transpired, and then headed off to our quarters to relax in a hot bath.

Later in the wardroom and during tiffin Jack and I realized that something indeed was up, because several other junior "W" officers showed an unusual degree of curiosity about our morning activities. As we were leaving the dining-room together, the quartermaster intercepted us and said that our PBM wanted to see us in his cabin at 1900 hours.

He was quite obviously in a bad mood when we showed up at the appointed hour and wasted little time in coming to the point. Just before lunch he had been summoned before Capt. Swinley, C.O. of HMS Mastodon, and informed about our meeting with Rear-Admiral Barry. Such conduct, he declared, was contrary to King's Rules and Admiralty Instructions (K.R. & A.I.) and could lead to immediate and dishonourable discharge. Jack and I remained speechless -- for my part, it suddenly dawned on me that while only two days earlier we had decided to enter the lion's den, now we were about to be eaten alive! When neither of us responded to his offer to speak in our own defence, the PBM ordered us to follow him to the C.O.'s cabin.



PBM O'Hagan



C.O. HMS Mastodon

Capt. Swinley, RN

with his great dane

Then after the charges against us had been re-read, Captain Swinley, RN, reiterated the seriousness of such misconduct and regretted that it would permanently tarnish our respective naval records which, he was advised, had been quite praiseworthy up to that point. As previously, Jack and I remained silent when asked if we had anything to say. Having conferred briefly with the C.O. and while we "prisoners" continued to stand at attention, the PBM read the following prepared statement:

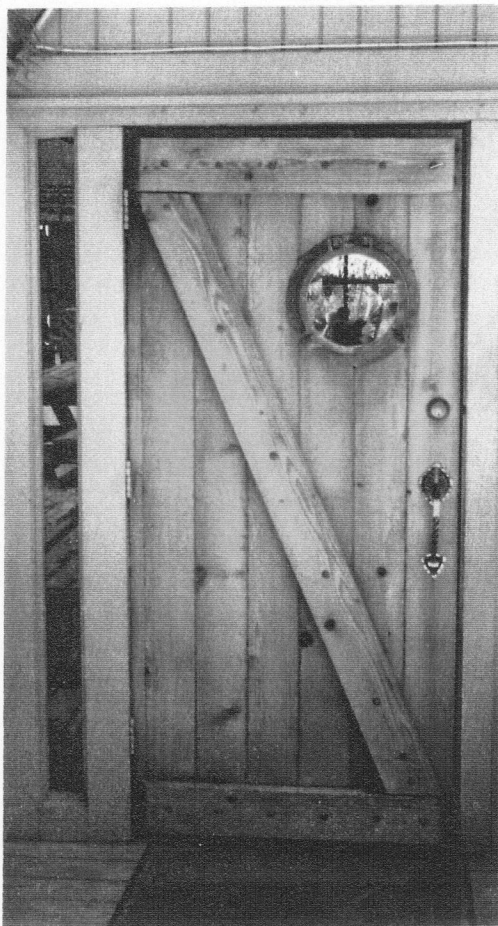
Whereas in the presence this day of Rear-Admiral Barry, RN, Lt.(n) J.K. Macbeth, RCNVR, and Lt. E.G. Finley, RCNVR, has each so volunteered, they shall, as soon as possible, be reappointed from RCN Beach Commando "W" to serve with the Royal Navy in midget submarines.

"Any questions? Lt. Macbeth? Lt. Finley?" A deadly silence prevailed. "Cases dismissed." We donned caps, saluted, about-faced, and duly departed.

Repairing to the wardroom, Jack and I remained speechless for quite some time. Then, as our pent-up tension gradually eased, we began to realize just what was happening. Youthful exuberance had propelled us to enter the lion's den and volunteer as submariners. Overlooking our misbehaviour but determined to teach us a lesson, the three senior naval officers had collectively decided to give us a good scare. So our punishment was a next-to-certain death sentence - MIDGET SUBMARINES. They had indeed called our bluff!!

(We never did transfer to midget or any submarines. Between April 5-9 we submitted formal applications to Rear-Admiral Barry. On April 15 we had interviews with Admiral Nelles and Lt. Cdr. Brooke SO(CO) in London, and were subsequently informed that any such transfer was refused until after the invasion of Normandy.)

PORTHOLE #7



PORTHOLE #7 **Reg's First Milk Run**

Throughout its ten-month life, "W" Commando was seldom without a mascot, invariably of canine form. In HMS Armadillo, our first training base, it was "Nelson", a stray mongrel which joined us during an overnight exercise into the hills around Loch Long. His attachment to our unit almost terminated as a result of the excessive interest he displayed towards the C.O.'s purebred spaniel bitch (see PORTHOLE #5a.). On the eve of leaving Scotland and moving to the south coast, however, we reluctantly accepted a local widow's offer to take "Nelson" in. We felt that he would be better off to remain in his Argyll surroundings and have a more permanent home.

At the end of May 1944 "W" Beach Commando arrived mascotless at their base in HMS Vectis (Pines Camp) near Cowes on the Isle of Wight. The boys immediately began to look around for a replacement for "Nelson". Before many days passed, ABs Reg Burse and "Smitty" Smith returned to the camp late one evening with a pair of the cutest puppies imaginable. Once formally adopted, the twin mascots now had to be properly nourished, something which caused extra concern since they were scarcely weaned. So while able with difficulty to handle the scraps of solid food from our messhall, they quite obviously yearned to suckle their mother.

On the afternoon of their first day-off, Reg, "Smitty", and two other ratings set off with a pail towards a nearby farm in quest of some milk which of course at the time constituted a strictly controlled and rationed food product. Approaching from a wooded area not visible from the farm-house and finding the "coast clear", they made plans for both the attack and the withdrawal. As the only member of the foursome with the

HMS VECTIS (PINES CAMP)
Cowes, Isle of Wight
Summer 1944



Front Row: Reg Burse (left) and
H.D. Smith (centre) cuddling puppies

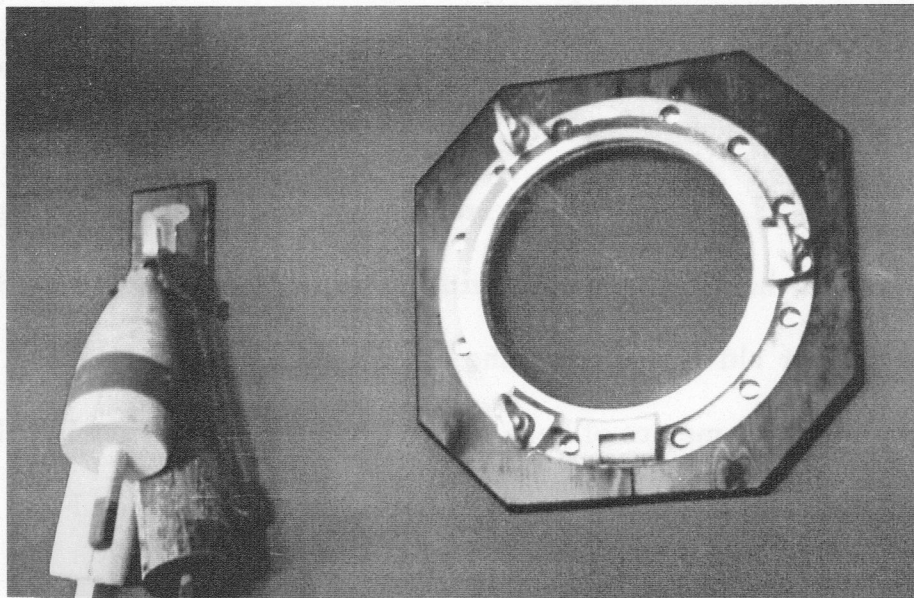
necessary experience, Reg would do the actual milking, with "Smitty" providing him support, and the other two standing guard.

Having singled out and befriended a well-laden cow, Reg proceeded to fill up the pail. It was barely half full when a loud cry rang out from the woods: "The farmer's coming -- let's exit pronto!!" The rest of the episode is described in Reg's Sept. 22, 1992 letter to the author:

...the farmer caught us milking the cow & chased us. As we were running, we had to jump across a wide ditch. I didn't quite make the other side, but landed up to my knees in black muck -- but still holding the can of milk without spilling a drop -- a great commando feat! The next day at base the commander had us all on the parade square, & gave us a very stern lecture on hindering the war effort, by stealing the farmer's milk -- the farmer had complained to him about our trespassing. We all stood there trying to keep a straight face, but as kids at heart, we were hard pressed to keep from snickering out loud.

Which experience, who's to know, may have helped Reg obtain his second postwar job on civvy street. After discharge and marriage in December 1945, he worked for a few months on a bread-delivery route in Burlington and then, as skipper of a horse-drawn wagon, took over a local milk run.

PORTHOLE #8



PORTHOLE #8 **Medic Mo Revisited**

Sunday July 23 1944 may very well reckon as the most critical day in my life. Having been picked off in JUNO sector of the Normandy beaches by a "Moaning Minnie" fired from the direction of Caen, the jeep I was driving swerved off the road, plunged into a ditch, and came to an abrupt stop. Fragments from the exploding shell had penetrated my skull and blown off my steel helmet. Seconds later I must have blacked out.

The next thing I recall -- approximately an hour later, according to official medical records -- was hearing and recognizing a familiar voice say: "Hello Skip. Do you remember me -- your old friend from the Mauretania?" "Good heavens, Ballem", I mumbled anxiously; "Get me out of here. Please!" Quite unintentionally I had arrived head-bandaged and clad in "strange naval uniform" at #10 Canadian Field Ambulance with RCAMC Captain "Medic Mo" in charge.

When he next spoke saying "When you get to Basingstoke, my wife Gwen will be your physiotherapist", I surmised that he harboured no lasting grudge against me for my behaviour towards him during our trans-Atlantic crossing together aboard HMT Mauretania some eight months previously (see PORTHOLE #3). Whatever his thoughts may have been, he immediately pumped me full of morphine and around midday sent me down the line.

My second revisit with Medic Mo took place in early 1945 when we bumped into one another in the Montreal Neurological Institute where he was on staff and I was being examined. I do not recall any part of our conversation or even if we actually engaged in one.

Then after a lapse of over forty years a third revisit occurred in an exchange of correspondence in connection with my research regarding RCN Beach Commando "W". In a 1988 letter to me from Texas, Medic Mo tongue-in-cheek's his personal view of our shared war-time experiences in these words:

My next memory is when I heard you were making eyes at my wife, who was a Physio at Basingstoke; until you caught her name and realized that you were, again, paying for your ill-treatment of me aboard the troopship.

Regarding our first two meetings -- in November 1943 aboard HMT Maurentania (see PORTHOLE #3) and in July 1944 in Normandy -- Medic Mo further comments: "The reason, of course, that I have used it on many occasions as an example of coincidences!"

PORTHOLE #9



PORTHOLE #9 **The Boy who cried "Wolf"**

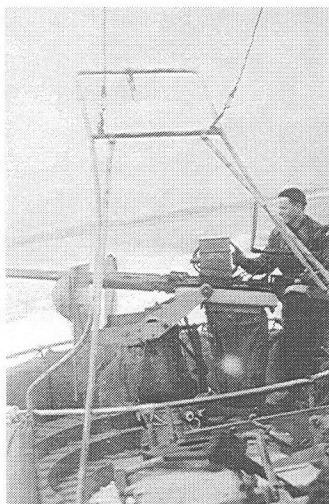
a) In France

In a Saturday July 1, 1944 signal, "W" Commando informed CNMO that the Maintenance Captain of HMS Vectis at Cowes had granted it nine days leave to commence the following Monday. That same Saturday I found out during an off-duty drive by jeep along the UK south coast that the RCAF's #127 Spitfire Wing, in which my older brother was a pilot, had moved from Tangmere to Airstrip B.2 near Bayeux in France on June 15 (D+9). Deeming it highly improbable at this advanced stage of the invasion that "W" would ever be called into action, I decided to investigate ways of getting over to see him. Accordingly on Sunday I drove to HMS Hornet at Portsmouth where the 29th Canadian MTB flotilla was based. Having successfully pleaded my case before my friend Bob Moyse, Skipper of MTB #462, and after he had signalled CNMO as follows: "Intend embarking LT EG FINLEY RCNVR for passage today Monday 3 July", in less than twenty-four hours I leaped almost dry-shod ashore on to the Normandy beaches near Courseulles -- ejected, as it were, like a modern-day Jonah.

Just imagine! Here I was on nine-day leave, the first "W" beach commando to set foot on French soil, standing all alone amidst the bustling activity of Allied forces already four weeks into Operation NEPTUNE. Before too long I managed to hitch a ride in a jeep driven by a Canadian Army sergeant who was heading off in a southwesterly direction. On the outskirts of Bayeux we learned of the location of the B.2 Airstrip (Bazenville, near Crépon) and soon afterwards arrived at its guarded gate-entrance.



Canadian MTBs at Portsmouth
July 1944



Taking passage to Normandy
Aboard RCN's MTB #462
July 3, 1944

After a thankful farewell to my chauffeur and satisfying the military police that I was not a spy, I set off on foot towards a cluster of camouflaged tents a few hundred yards in the distance.

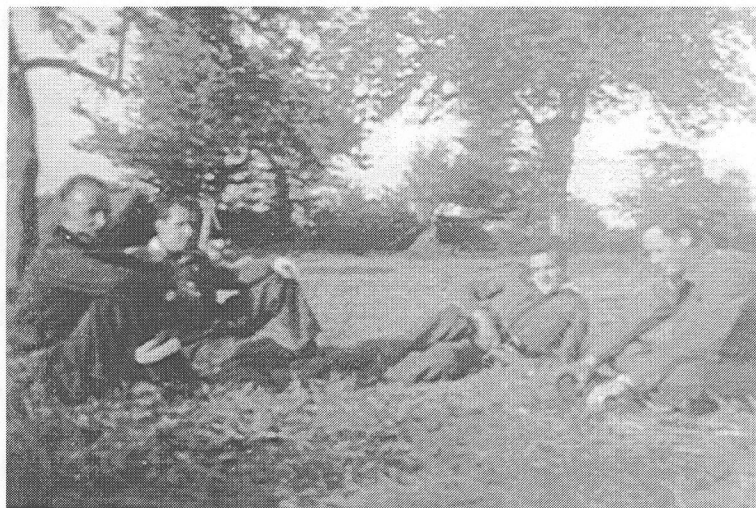
Authorized by King George to be called the "Wolf" squadron and flying Spitfires, #403 constituted one of the four comprising RCAF #127 Wing. Ever since arriving in Britain at the end of 1943 the "Wolf" squadron, in which my older brother Hartland was a pilot, had been my overseas home. When granted leave, I'd often visit and stay at their station near Kenley in Surrey and so came to know most of the pilots and ground crew.

Upon reaching the dispersal area, I found out that my brother wasn't due to return from a sweep for about a half-hour. What then to do in the interim? Egged on by some off-duty pilots who greeted me warmly and under the direction of the medical officer and a couple of his staff, I became instantaneously transformed into a head-bandaged and barely-ambulatory war casualty. Hardly was my disguise completed than communication control announced the imminent landing of all nine #403 Spitfires. My fellow conspirators immediately hid me in a nearby tent which the returning pilots would soon be passing on their way to the debriefing area. Recognizing my brother as he came off the runway carrying his parachute, I slowly emerged from my hiding place, complete with crutches and fully-bandaged head, limping awkwardly to intercept him.

RCAF #127 Spitfire Wing, B.2 Airstrip, Bazenville, Normandy

Pilots relaxing

July 4, 1944



Some of the Top Brass,
including "Mike",
the Groupie's great dane

Summer 1944

(Left to Right)

S/L E.P. "Eep" Wood; unknown; S/L "Cam" McArthur, M.D.;
S/L W.A.G. "Wally" Conrad; W/C R.W. "Buck" McNair;
unknown; W/C Father Brown; W/C R.A. "Bob" Buckham;
G/C W.R. "Iron Bill" MacBrien

"My God, Gattie Boy", he sputtered out anguishingly as our eyes met, "what in hell happened to you?" "Oh, Hattie", I mumbled almost inaudibly, "The Gerries really clobbered us on the beaches". His face and parachute fell simultaneously. Silence ensued. But after a minute or two, on hearing some giggling and noticing a few smiling faces in the background, he gradually realized that the whole affair was just a prank.

That evening #403 Squadron celebrated the completion of Hart's first tour of operations and two days later, after writing the following joint Air Letter home, he and I flew back to England as passengers aboard an Avro Anson fully loaded with Allied wounded ("will never forget spectacle", as my diary records) and landed on the south coast at Bognor Regis:

5th July 1944. Somewhere in France. Dearest Mother. Hart & I are together again. You'll have to wait till later to hear all the details. Both join in all our love to you. Skip. Hart. Cheers!"

At Hart's former Tangmere station where we figured on spending the night before heading up to London next morning to continue our leave together, an urgent message announced the cancellation of "W"'s nine-day leave and ordered me to return immediately to my ship on the Isle of Wight.

W/C Buckham (left) and F/L Finley
examine a German Luger pistol
at
RCAF #127 Spitfire Wing
B.2 Airstrip
Bazenville, Normandy
July 1944



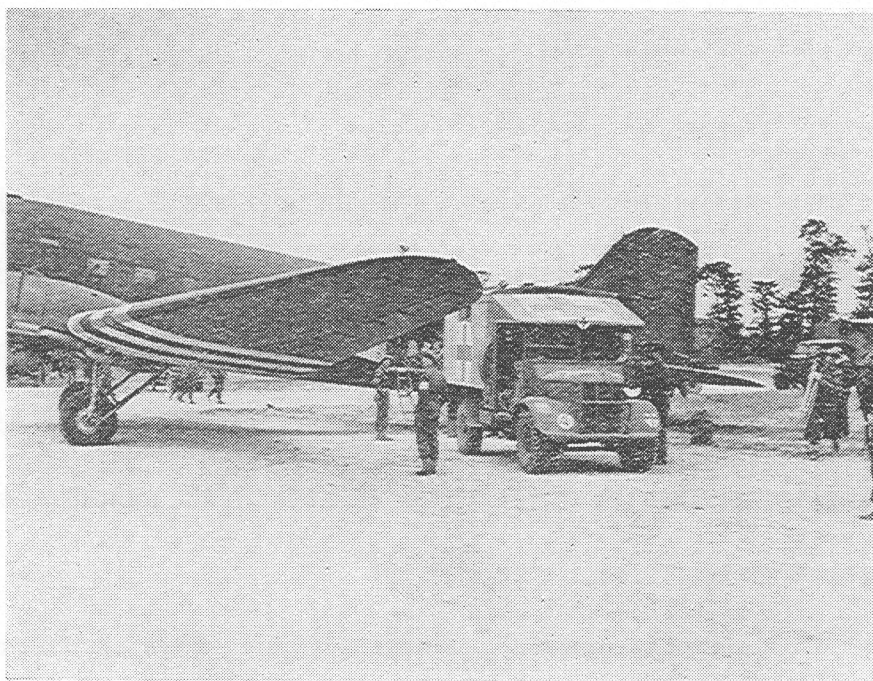
PORTHOLE #9 **The Boy who cried "Wolf"**

b) In England

By the time I arrived back aboard HMS Vectis (Pines Camp), about three quarters of "W" Commando's eighty-man complement had already sailed for Courseulles in Normandy to relieve RN Beach Commando "P" which, by then, had been handling operations on to and off of JUNO sector's "Mike" beach for the entire four weeks since D-Day on June 6. Not until July 16 did the remaining "W" members (including myself) who "missed the boat" manage to join up with the others in Normandy.

After breakfast on July 23 while driving in my jeep with Lt. Jack Cronin (ABM in W-3) as a passenger, a big explosion suddenly occurred about ten yards away to our right. Automatically I tried to apply the brakes but, before this intention produced any effect, the jeep had veered off the road and come to a jolting halt in the deep left-hand ditch. "My God", Jack yelled, "you've been hit in the head!"

My next conscious recollection was being told by a nurse that I was in a Canadian hospital (Basingstoke Neurological and Plastic Surgery). Subsequently I would learn from my medical records that after receiving first-aid at #3 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, my head was operated on during the early evening by an RAMC captain of #6 MNSU which was attached to #75 General Hospital at Bayeux and that thirty-six hours afterwards I had been air-evacuated to Swindon and then ambulated to Basingstoke.



CASUALTIES BEING LOADED INTO DAKOTA AIRCRAFT

An ambulance backs up to the double doors of a Dakota to transfer wounded, Normandy, 16 June 1944. The photograph below shows a soldier, wounded in the fighting at the front, being transferred from an army ambulance to an aircraft at an airfield in Normandy, 17 June 1944. Once in England, Canadian casualties, except emergency cases, were immediately sent to one of the Canadian general hospitals there.



(Of passing interest it may be noted that all head-injured British service personnel who arrived at Swindon normally went by special train to St. Hughs College hospital at Oxford.)

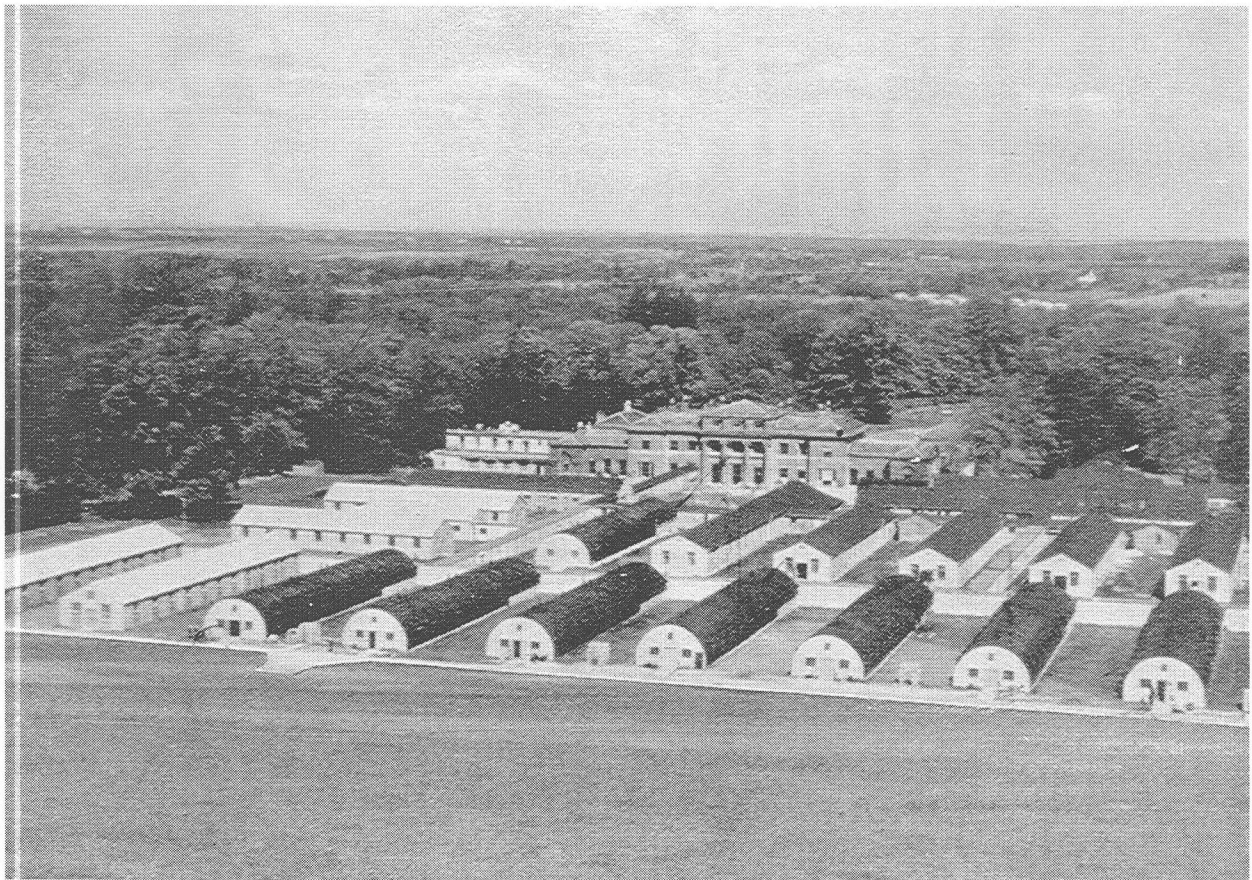
So here I was at the same hospital in which, following a near fatal crash-landing in his Spitfire seven months prior to the invasion, Bob Pentland had been a quadraplegic patient before returning to Canada where, as head physiotherapist at Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue military hospital near Montreal, Mother treated him for several months. Bob was my brother Hart's best friend in the "Wolf" squadron and many of us had visited him at Basingstoke.

My wound consisted of metal fragments (probably from an 88mm shell, though also possibly from my steel helmet) lodged in the skull's right temporal region with resultant left-side hemiplegia. After a week I dictated a short letter home to Mother, and the doctor, who was in charge of neurosurgery at the hospital and had looked after Bob, kindly added the following note:

*Skip is doing well & actually will be up in a few days. His left arm & leg are not working very well yet we anticipate considerable improvement. His memory is vague only for events immediately before & after the injury, & is now again good. Please don't worry. Do give my regards to Bob Pentland.
[signed: Col.] Harry Botterell.*



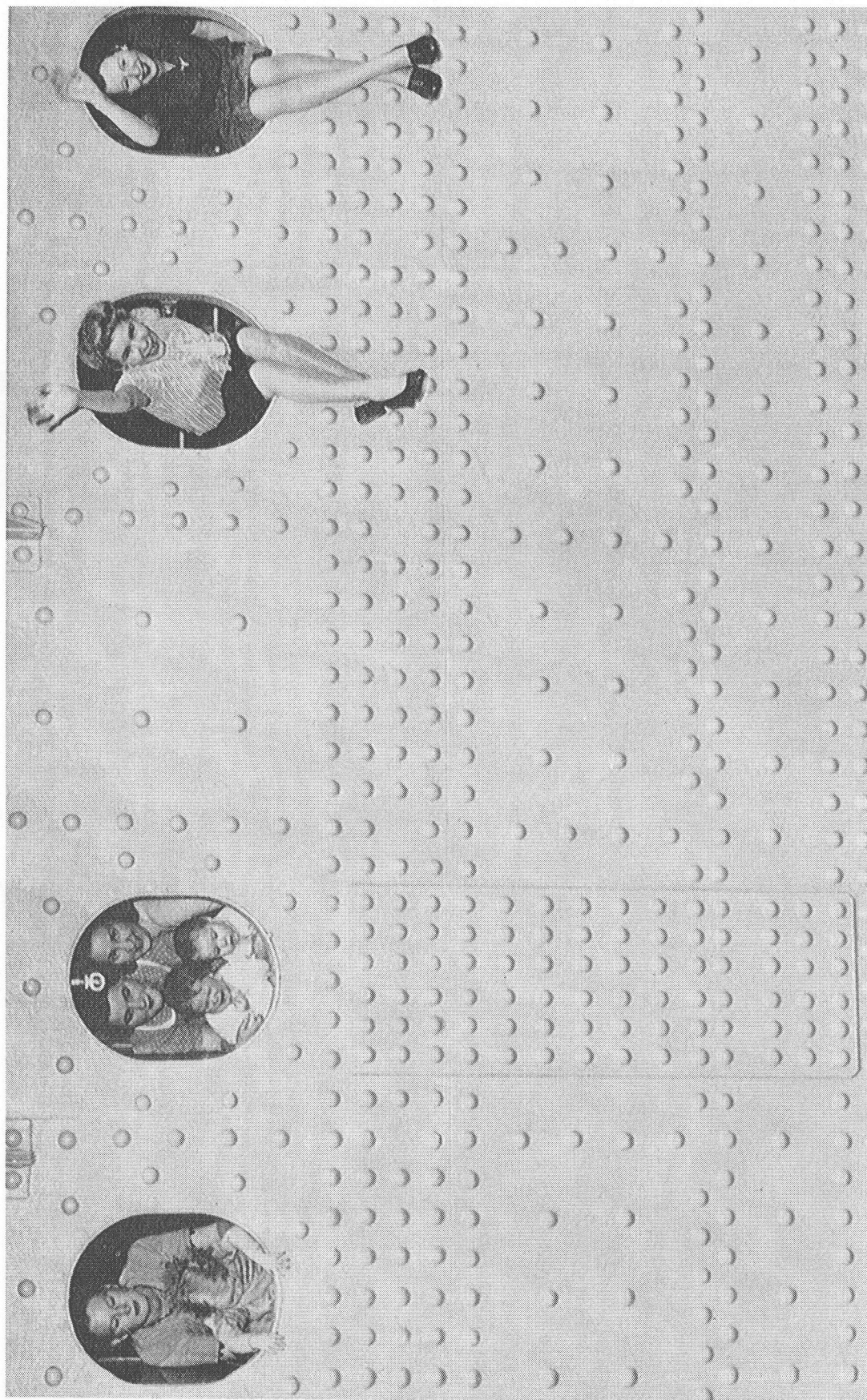
Dr. Harry

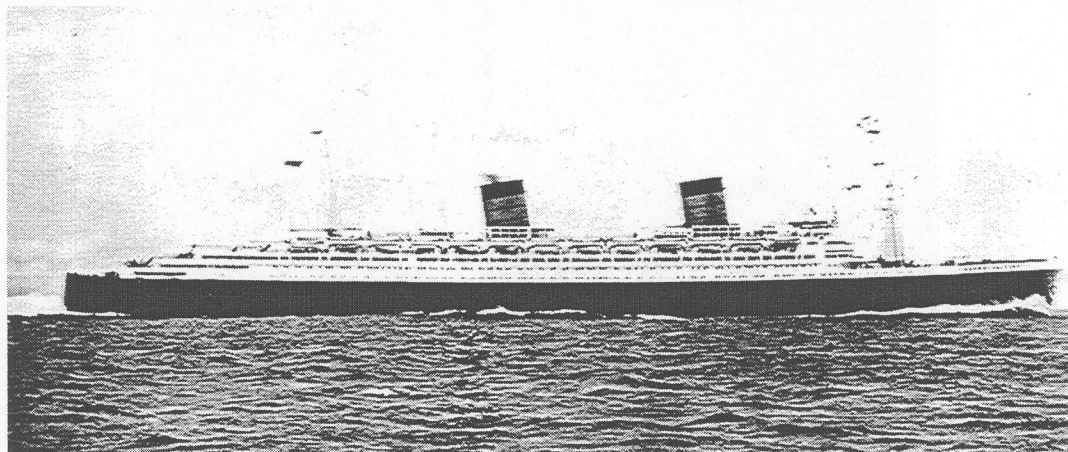


View of Hackwood Park's BNPS hospital buildings
taken from a Spitfire aircraft in May 1945

Meanwhile the hospital administration had been trying to contact my brother. They finally succeeded in tracing him to an RAF Spitfire training station in northern England. However, having been bitten once only recently and suspecting trickery again, it evidently necessitated several telephone calls and the personal assurance of Col. Botterell himself before he could be convinced that lying there in BN & PS hospital, seriously wounded by the Huns on the beaches of Normandy, was the Boy who cried "Wolf" less than a month previously in France. Needless to say, I greatly appreciated when Hart paid me a much undeserved two-day visit at Basingstoke.

PORTHOLE #10





HMT QUEEN ELIZABETH

- 1938 Sept. 27 -- Launched by Queen Elizabeth
- 1940 Mar. 2 -- Secret maiden voyage, Clyde to New York
- Nov. 13 -- Sailed for Singapore to be fitted out as a
troop carrier
- 1941 April -- In convoy with HMT QUEEN MARY left
Sydney carrying 6,500 troops
- 1941-1945 -- Carried some 800,000 Allied service personnel
and travelled half a million miles
- 1946 Oct. 16 -- First peace-time voyage
- 1967 Sept. -- "FINISHED WITH ENGINES"

PORTHOLE #10 **The Senior Senior Service**

In connection with Operation NEPTUNE, which constituted the naval part of the 1944 Allied invasion of Normandy, the Royal Canadian Navy manned several dozen warships, five landing craft flotillas, and a beach commando. The latter eighty-five member unit, which was officially designated as RCN Beach Commando "W", served on Juno sector's "Mike" and "Nan" beaches. Having helped establish a permanent beachhead in this area, from which the combined Canadian and British armies attacked southwards and eventually captured Caen, Beach Commando "W" returned to their base on the Isle of Wight and disbanded at the end of August. After a short leave, most of "W"'s seventy odd ratings were drafted to HMCS Niobe, Canada's naval establishment at Gourock in Scotland, to await repatriation. A few days later great excitement spread among these Combined Operations ratings as word leaked out that the trans-Atlantic crossing would be made aboard the 80,000-ton troopship Queen Elizabeth ("QE").

However, the initial feeling of exhilaration became tempered somewhat soon after the group boarded the giant liner early on the morning of Monday, September 11. Two accidents which occurred on the ship earlier in the week had apparently activated the rumour mill and created a certain sense of foreboding throughout the ship.

One accident happened at 2030 hours the previous Thursday night as the "QE" lay at anchor in the Firth of Clyde. Two American top sergeants (named Mikowski and Blomberg), who manned one of the ship's defensive guns, were carrying out routine Anti-Sabotage patrol when Blomberg, upon seeing a suspicious-looking figure in the dark, fired a shot from his pistol at what he took to be a saboteur. In fact he had

THE QE's AFT DECKS
upon arrival in New York
June 1945



wounded his own buddy who was rushed to the nearby Greenock Royal Infirmary and successfully operated on for the removal of a bullet from his abdomen.

The second accident took place on the evening of September 10, just a few hours before the RCN beach commandos began embarking. Sturnmann Julius Gersbach, a German PoW, was being escorted by a steward to dump some mess-hall litter overboard when he slipped on the sill at the bottom of a staircase and fell head-long through an open doorway into the Firth of Clyde. The escorting steward immediately sounded the alarm which soon brought Assistant Steward P.V. Davis onto the scene. Noting the general commotion and hearing "gurgling" sounds, Davis shone a flashlight out into the darkness and saw a pair of hands about twenty yards away. After quickly removing his shoes he dove into the water and despite considerable difficulty managed to pull Gersbach safely to a rope ladder which in the meantime had been lowered over the side. [N.B. A translation of the PoW's statement regarding the incident reads: "I was ordered to empty a wooden box filled with paper through an opening (door) in the side of the ship. I thought it was a coal-hole. I slipped and fell into the water."]

It should be pointed out that, except for US Army personnel who made up the gun crews, the large majority of the permanent ship's company consisted of British military types. Upon venturing below decks to locate their assigned sleeping quarters, the beach commandos discovered that the Brits had already taken possession of the best (namely,

the lower) bunks in every six-berth cabin. Therefore, partly in gest but admittedly also in a show of national solidarity, the Canadian matelots promptly set about transferring all RN-owned gear into the middle and upper bunks, and stowing their own in the now vacated lowers.

While there is virtually no cessation of loading general stores on to a major trooper whenever she is in port, embarkation of passengers in this case commenced Sunday morning, September 10 and was completed some thirty-six hours later. The official report of this voyage, designated as Convoy TA [i.e. Trans-Atlantic westbound] 146, lists the following statistics for selected units and categories embarked:

R.C.N.	304 (33 officers, 271 ratings)
Brit. Merchant Marine	188
U.S. Army	952 (877 being battle casualties)
U.S. Navy	356
German PoWs	3597 (227 officers, 3370 ORs)

Ship's Staff (officers)

Commandant	22	
Air Force	11	
R.N.	4	
Brit. Army	<u>122</u>	<u>159</u>

TOTAL *5556

*Counting Civilians (372) and all others, there were actually over seven thousand persons aboard.

Anchors finally weighed at 1530 hours and, because of German submarine threats, two R.N. destroyers took up station ahead to act as escort during the next thirty-six hours. Enemy submarine activity also prompted Admiralty authorities both to set Convoy TA 146's course south of Eire (north being the regular route) and also to instruct the Captain to make more frequent course deviations than usual. Scarcely had the "QE" left here anchorage than a Limey-accented order, thrice repeated, blared out clearly over the ship's loudspeaker system:

*Attention! Attention! Canadian Commonwealth Colonial Navy fall in
Promenade deck portside on the double!!*

The entire 304 Canadian naval personnel listened in disbelief as to how they were being addressed, and only from disciplined habit did they, albeit reluctantly, dutifully respond to the order. As soon as they had mustered, an R.N. Chief Petty Officer divided them into three groups: 1. Officers; 2. CPOs, POs, & Leading Seamen; 3. ABs & ODs. Having dismissed Groups 1 and 2, he told Group 3 that from henceforth they were to obey only orders given by R.N. personnel. Then, after informing them what duties they would be expected to carry out during the voyage and where daily lists were posted, he told them to "Fall out"! While there was no general objection by the hundred or so ratings in Group 3 to being assigned duty as such or to the particular duties themselves, a united opposition and even animosity did develop spontaneously to the high-handed (and voiced) manner in which they came to be treated. And over the next twenty-four hours certain incidents occurred to lend support to their dissatisfaction.

For instance, while standing watch as "spare" loaders at a fo'c's'le gun station, ABs Albrechtson and Watkins (both of whom had been members of R.C.N. Beach Commando "W") were flabbergasted and insulted when, on making his rounds, the duty R.N. "cookie" offered coffee and doughnuts to the regular U.S. Army gun crews but completely ignored them. They subsequently found out that similar treatment was accorded to many of their buddies. Initially the Americans thought it was either simply an oversight or just a little joke, but when the practice persisted, they became uncomfortable and quite sympathetic to the Canadians.

Then there was an incident where Sig. T/O Lefaivre, who had just stood the previous middle watch (midnight to 0400), was rudely awakened and dumped out of his hammock by an R.N. "killick" at 0530 because of a supposed emergency which turned out to be a purposely set false alarm.

When others in the Combined Operations group (which included landing craft and beach commando ratings) experienced similar treatment in connection with practically every assigned duty, an attitude of impatience soon turned into an undercurrent of bitterness and even hostility.

On the second day out, beach commando AB Smith pretended not to hear an R.N. Petty Officer's order to carry out some minor order and just nonchalantly and silently stood his ground. After repeating the order twice (the second time in an extra loud voice only inches from Smith's ear) and receiving neither verbal acknowledgment nor physical reaction, the PO told Smith he was under arrest and would be placed on the First Lieutenant's report. For his misbehaviour, Smith was "sentenced to cells" and spent the

remainder of the voyage alone in a lower-deck, guarded, chicken-wired enclosure similar to the six-man type occupied by some 3,600 German PoWs. Within twenty-four hours, having refused to carry out comparable minor orders, five additional Combined Operations ratings (three from the Beach Commando and two from the LCI(L) flotillas) also landed up in individual cells with no communication between them. By including Smith, the group thereafter became referred to by their buddies as "The Gang of Six".

By this time R.A.F. Group Captain A.K. Ashden, the Ship Commandant for Convoy TA 146, must have been somewhat concerned lest the situation get out of hand. Up until then he had been primarily preoccupied with finding suitable quarters for some nine hundred American battle casualties, of whom 427 were stretcher cases. Since the QE's hospital capacity was only around 200, two of the ship's main lounges as well as its library were taken over at the last moment in order to rectify what had obviously been a gross miscalculation. Besides causing considerable medical inconveniences, these take-overs significantly reduced recreational space which in turn helped create and sustain a generally negative atmosphere among the passengers. In his official Voyage Report, Lt.Col. J.H. Armstrong notes that all those concerned, including the Cunard White Star Line's Deputy Chairman, agreed that the "QE" was simply "not fitted to carry such large numbers of casualties and prisoners-of-war at the same time." "A very difficult medical situation" is the phrase used by an R.A.F. Wing Commander in his capacity as Senior Medical Officer.

Apparently no additional Canadian ratings ended up "in the brig". Subject no.6 entitled DISCIPLINE in the official report reads as follows:

Discipline on board the ship was fair, there being difficulty maintaining discipline amongst the Royal Canadian Navy Draft, which consisted of a large number of Naval Commandos. However, towards the end of the voyage, the situation was greatly improved.

Prior to reaching New York, the "Gang of Six" was informed that they would be sent under escort of a special Canadian naval guard to Halifax with a recommendation from the "QE"'s Commandant that H.M.C.S. Peregrine's Commanding Officer apply all sections of K.R. & A.I. which pertained to their indiscipline. In simple naval jargon, the recommendation was "to throw the book at them."

Led by the large contingent of prisoners, disembarkation at Pier 90 in New York commenced early on the afternoon of September 17 and took less than twenty-four hours to complete. Unfortunately a few in the CO group would never again see some of the pieces of their luggage which had been stowed in the cargo hold. Pilfering was one obvious reason but the general bedlam prevailing on and around the docks certainly didn't help in claiming or holding on to all one's personal gear. Among the amusing incidents which eased the tensions of the moment was AB Nelson's dismay when a U.S. custom's official, upon feeling the unusual weight of the Canadian sailor's hammock, made him unravel the seven hitches and open it up. The net result? One confiscated British tommy gun obtained on the Normandy beaches and one disappointed souvenir hunter.

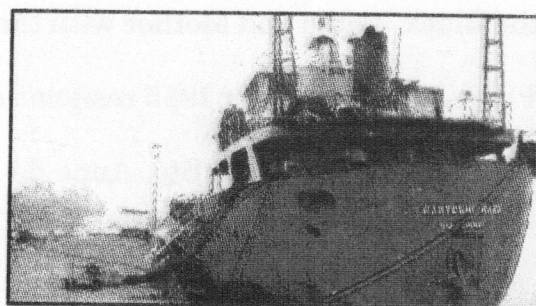
With time to kill before entraining for Halifax, the whole CO group gratefully accepted the kind invitation of the nearby Brooklyn Navy Yard employees to what proved to be a sumptuous lunch of seemingly endless delicious dishes, the likes of which they'd probably not even dreamed about for a year or more.

En route to "Slackers" (the affectionate nickname given to "an East Coast Canadian Port"), a potentially embarrassing moment happened when the penniless CO group members realized they could not leave the customary tips for dining-car services. But the situation was resolved by the waiters themselves who, sensing the matelots' predicament, gave a thunderous round of applause and tipped their hats in appreciation for the service rendered by these returning combat veterans. The *pièce de résistance* of arriving back in North America occurred later that night when each rating eventually crawled between the white cotton sheets in his own private lower berth.

Arrival in Halifax brought on mixed emotions because the Gang was taken directly to H.M.C.S. Peregrine and paraded before the Commanding Officer. In a lengthy opening address, the C.O. clearly and in minute detail pointed out that they had each committed the equivalent of a mutinous act. Then, being careful neither to condone nor to minimize the serious nature of such misbehaviour, he eventually concluded his remarks by declaring that because of certain extenuating circumstances and as an act of mercy on his part for this occasion, he would drop all charges brought against the six whom he thereupon identified by rating, full name, and official number.

Upon dismissal and before rejoining their CO comrades to proceed on foreign service leave, the "Gang of Six" stopped in at the canteen and mutually conceded they'd doubtlessly forever remember this recent week-long experience initiated and largely controlled by the Senior Senior Service.

PORTHOLE #11



PORTHOLE #11 **Not Serious Enough?**

Probably sometime in 1941 Gus Pentland's two sons, Bill and Bob, joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in their Calgary hometown with the intention of becoming fighter pilots. As recent highschool graduates, both were athletically talented, particularly in badminton where they had acquired both the Alberta provincial junior doubles title and also seventeen-inch necks.

In the course of earning their wings in Canada under the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, they met up with my elder brother Hartland who similarly had his sights set on eventually flying Hurricanes or Spitfires. Hart and Bob formed a strong friendship bond when, as a result of being stationed together in Ottawa, they played on the RCAF Uplands football team which included the great Tony Golab and which won the CFL's 1941 Eastern Division title.

Whenever Bob or Bill visited Montreal on furlough, they'd invariably bunk down in our home, where they came to be accepted as family members. In passing it may be noted that not only did both my parents see considerable World War I service -- father with the Black Watch and Mother with the Voluntary Aid Detachment -- but throughout World War II and until her 1955 resignation, Mother worked as a physiotherapist in the federal military hospital at Ste. Anne-de-Bellevue.

WORLD WAR I

My Mother to be

VADs were dubbed
VERY ARTFUL DARLINGS

My Father to be



MISS E. MARJORIE ROSS,
daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John
W. Ross, of Montreal, one of
the young Canadian V.A.D's.,
who is nursing in Gifford
House Auxiliary Hospital, Roe-
hampton, S.W. England. She
is a niece of Lieut.-Col. James
G. Ross, C.M.G., Chief Pay-
master of the Canadian Expe-
ditionary Force.

Wounded at Vimy Ridge
with the 42nd Battalion,
Royal Highlanders of Canada
(Black Watch),
Capt. (later Maj.) E.B. Finley, MC,
is pictured here
at the time
of his March 1918 investiture
in London

Bill, the elder Pentland brother, was posted as a Pilot Officer early in 1942 to an RCAF fighter squadron in England and soon achieved an impressive operational record. Towards the end of the year, Bob and Hart, by then Pilot Officers, also proceeded to the UK where they underwent short training stints on Typhoons and Hurricanes before joining RCAF #403 Squadron at Kenley in Surrey to fly Spitfires.

On the first of December, 1943, as an RCNVR lieutenant, I disembarked from HMT Mauretania at Liverpool and headed off to HMS ARMADILLO at Ardentinnny on Loch Long to commence Combined Operations training as an Assistant Beachmaster with the newly-formed, 85-member, RCN Beach Commando "W".

Having learned shortly after that Christmas leave for my unit coincided roughly with Hart's and Bob's, we made reservations at the North British Hotel in Edinburgh to start December 23. Since my leave actually began on the 22nd, I took advantage of an invitation to stay overnight in Glasgow with Nellie and Tina Dansken, two never-before-met, elderly, maiden, Scottish, great aunts -- always referred to in our Canadian family circle as "the Scotch cousins".

After receiving the warmest of welcomes, being treated (despite war-time shortages) to a truly royal banquet, and then entertained till almost midnight by Nellie's loud, shrill, off-key singing voice and by Tina's exuberant accompaniment on their out-of-tune piano, I despaired of ever getting to sleep afterwards, having laughed and giggled myself into a state of utter exhaustion. No part of our first three weeks of commando training had come even close to leaving me in such a weakened condition.

WORLD WAR II

R.T. Pentland



H.R. Finley

RCAF Flying Officers
lounge beside a Typhoon at an OTU
air base in England
June 6, 1943



F/L W.H. Pentland beside a Spitfire
Northwest Africa, 1943

As S/L, DFC,
he was killed Oct. 20, 1944 in Europe
on what was to have been
the last mission
of his second tour of operations

Finding myself after next morning réveille none the worse for the previous evening's revelry, and having dutifully conquered a mountain of delicious steaming "parritch" [i.e. porridge] and done justice to endless volumes of yellowing family photographs. I profusely thanked my hostesses, promised to visit again, and descended the outside staircase to their Kirklee Quadrant flat off the Great Western Road. During the ensuing train ride to Edinburgh my thoughts shifted towards the near-at-hand rendezvous with Bob and Hart whom I had last seen just a year before in Halifax where they were awaiting trans-Atlantic passage to the UK. In relation to those bygone days, two particular events clearly crossed my mind as we pulled out of Glasgow station.

The first centered around my introducing Hart and Bob and several of their RCAF comrades to "pusser" navy rum at parties aboard our fairmile, HMCM/L "Q-092", which at the time was assigned to "loop patrol" duties outside the harbour gate-vessels. The second event occurred the morning of the day their troopship sailed. Hart, with me accompanying him, entered a florist shop on Barrington Street and proceeded to order some flowers. At first I paid little attention to his actions, presuming that he was probably just sending a bouquet to Mother, in which case I would gladly share any cost. But when in response to the salesperson asking him: "To whom are the flowers to be addressed?", he replied "Miss Betty Stewart, 27 Carleton Avenue, Westmount, Montreal", my ears pricked up as I went on full alert. Good grief, I said to myself, but that's my girl-friend.

It was around noon when I approached the Registration desk at the North British Hotel and enquired about our reservation. Upon stating my name, the receptionist responded rather casually: "Welcome, Lt. Finley", adding, after a brief pause: "There's a message been here for you a couple of days". Opening the envelope handed to me, the telegram inside read: "Bob seriously injured. Leave cancelled. Suggest you come down here." I was dumbfounded!

Later in the evening as I boarded the train to London, it occurred to me that, although due to an entirely different reason, for the second successive night, sleep would probably not come easily. By lunchtime next day I had arrived at Hart's air-field south of London and learned the circumstances which caused Bob's injury. On a December 20th morning "ramrod" mission over France he was credited with damaging a Focke-Wolf 190 but during an afternoon scramble his Spitfire had been extensively raked by enemy cannon shells on his return from the Continent. Trying desperately to make it back safely to the Kenley aerodrome, he crash landed on the edge of the runway and sustained severe multiple injuries. With great difficulty and under the supervision of Cam McArthur, the Squadron's chief medical officer, Bob was eventually extricated from his totally-wrecked plane and rushed by ambulance to the RCAMC's Basingstoke Neurological and Plastic Surgery hospital.

The day before Christmas, Cam, Hart and I motored to Basingstoke and visited Bob briefly. Although conscious and seemingly able to recognize us, he appeared quite disoriented as a result of his experience some hundred hours earlier. After conferring with Lt. Col. E. Harry Botterell, the hospital's chief neurosurgeon, Cam told us that

S/L C. McArthur, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer
#127 RCAF Spitfire Wing
B.2 Airstrip
Bazenville, Normandy
Summer 1944



although Bob's life no longer appeared to be in danger, his quadraplegic condition would likely continue indefinitely. Repatriated to Canada in March 1944 on a hospital ship, he spent several months at Ste Anne's military hospital where Mother administered and supervised his physiotherapy treatment. Transferred to Colonel Belcher Hospital in Calgary towards the end of the war, Bob subsequently married Marie, one of his nurses. However, for the remainder of his life, he remained confined to a wheel chair or the specially designed bed in their humble home where he died a few years later from liver and kidney complications.

Christmas 1943 and New Years 1944 came and went, and as springtime approached it became increasingly evident that the invasion of the Continent was not far off. D-Day finally dawned on June 6 and some four weeks later RCN Beach Commando "W", which had been waiting in the wings, was ordered by the British Admiralty to take charge of landing craft disembarkations on Juno sector's "Mike" and "Nan" beaches in Normandy.

In order to understand the thrust from here on of this present PORTHOLE, the reader should take note of certain paragraphs of the RCN's Naval Order 3741 which came into effect on June 24, 1944 and was entitled "Casualties --- Procedures for Reporting". Extracts from paragraphs relevant to our purpose state:

- [1.] "In the event of death or serious injury or illness occurring in sea-going ships of the Royal Canadian Navy, ..., whether through enemy action or not, particulars are to be reported to Naval Service Headquarters as soon as possible by telegram or W/T, repeated to their administrative authority, R.C.N. Depot and Accounting Base."

D DAY 6.6.44



3615
IGN

INSTITUT GEOGRAPHIQUE NATIONAL



3 282118 700110

NORMANDY BEACHES
JUNE 6 1944

2. "In the case of Canadian Naval personnel serving in H.M. ships serving in European waters, notification will be sent by signal to the Canadian Naval Mission Overseas, repeated to the operational authority, Admiralty, High Commissioner for Canada and H.M.C.S. "Niobe". The C.N.M.O. is to advise N.S.H.Q. and R.C.N. Depot, Halifax."
4. "Next of kin will be informed of such casualties by Naval Service Headquarters in all cases except (a) those covered by *Paragraph 7 below, and (b) where next of kin reside in United Kingdom, who are to be informed by the Canadian Naval Mission Overseas, upon obtaining Admiralty approval for release."

Around ten o'clock in the morning of July 23rd, while driving a jeep with Lt. Jack Cronin (a fellow Assistant Beachmaster) seated to my right and almost simultaneously on hearing a cry of "Get the hell out of here!" emanate from a group of Allied soldiers taking cover behind a nearby hedge-row, a huge explosion suddenly shook the ground a few yards away on our starboard side! I immediately hit the brakes and applied full opposite rudder to the steering wheel as we veered sharply off the road towards a steep embankment. A few seconds later our jeep came to an abrupt halt in the lefthand ditch. "My God", Jack yelled, "You've been hit, Skip!". On reaching up to my right temple and noting that my steel helmet had gone **AWOL, my fingers entered a batch of warm blood. In attempting to get out of the jeep in the usual way, I discovered that both my left arm and leg were powerless to carry my weight, so my exit had to be achieved by rolling over and bailing out. Then, before lapsing into unconsciousness, I vaguely recall trying to drag myself along the ditch to a less exposed location in case the enemy

*Paragraph 7 deals with "the next of kin of casualties occurring locally, i.e., in establishments in Canada and Newfoundland or in the immediate vicinity thereof,...."

**Away without leave.



"Skip" at the Wheel of a Jeep
Normandy, July 1944

shelling resumed.

Apart from being badly shaken up, Jack apparently came through the incident relatively unscathed and remained with "W" Beach Commando until it returned to England and disbanded four weeks later. However, and because our paths never again crossed, I unfortunately do not have his firsthand account of what happened to me after becoming unconscious.

According to Capt. F.E.J. Gabel, an RCAMC doctor with #10 Field Ambulance who gave me morphine and anti-tetanus shots* two hours later, I probably would have been picked up by a Canadian Red Cross jeep. Capt. C.M. Ballem, another #10 F.A. RCAMC doctor (whom we have already met as "Medic Mo" in PORTHOLE #3 and PORTHOLE #8), provides an amusing commentary on these several events in his August 23, 1988 response to my May 19/88 letter to him:

*For a chronological list of all medical records and documents referred to in the text, see Appendix.



Badge and Flashes worn on Battle Dress
by RCN Beach Commandos



Head-Wound Casualty receiving Blood Plasma at an Advanced
Dressing Station to combat Shock preparatory to Evacuation
European Theatre 1944

Of course I remember you, how could I forget?! Especially after my kindness in finding you a bunk, you repaid me by razzing me all the way to Liverpool. The only way I'd be able to get my own back would be to meet you in a beach dressing station.....

The 10th F.A. had been pulled back into rest near Caen at the time of your arrival. I was not actually on duty, but happened to be there when you came in with your strange "naval uniform". You were being cared for and your head was all bandaged, when I came over and spoke to you, (as I remember, you were called "Skip" in those days). I recall picking up your tag, reading the name and saying, "Hello, Skip; do you remember me?...Your old friend from the Mauretania?". Your reply was, "Oh, my heavens Ballem! Get me out of here!" We put you aboard an ambulance and sent you back down the line.*

.....I am very sure about the fact that you did speak to me at the 10th Field Ambulance; and you did plead with me to forget all about the shabby treatment of me when I was sick and suffering on that horrible ship!.....

The reason, of course, that I remember the story so clearly, is because of the fact that I've used it on many occasions as an example of coincidences!

With my Field Card marked "serious", I left #10 F.A. near Faubourg de Vaucelles shortly after noon and headed "down the line" to a Casualty Clearing Station. "En route C.C.S.", my medical record notes, "the ambulance was dive-bombed by FW 190s. Tho' the vehicle was completely demolished & other patients killed, this man was not further hurt, tho' found unconscious."

At 1320 I arrived at #3 Canadian C.C.S. on the outskirts of Sequeville-en-Bassin where RCAMC Capt. S.E. Evans entered the following on to my file: "1430: Admitted to Resus. Bp. 125/65. Pupils equal. Arousable. Evacuate -- Priority I." My next move to Bayeux is well described by RAMC Capt. E.A. Turner who came eventually to perform an operation on my head at #6 Mobile Neuro-Surgical Unit, which was attached to the 75th British General Hospital at Bayeux. In his 7th June 1988 letter to me, he writes:

*The RCN Beach Commando "W" uniform consisted of khaki battledress, leather jerkin, and regular naval cap (or steel helmet). A Combined Operations badge as well as "Canada" and "Commando" flashes were worn on each arm of the battledress jacket.



Casualties evacuated from Forward Area by Jeep Ambulance
being transferred to Standard Ambulance
for trip to nearest Field Medical Installation
Normandy, June 1944

...you would be transferred to #6 MNSU from your Casualty Clearing Station as a routine, since you had a penetrating brain wound. It was either that or go to a Canadian Mobile Neurological Unit. There was a Canadian Unit, but my recollection is that it did not function immediately, and until it opened we treated the Canadian head injuries as well as the British ones. Even after the Canadian Unit opened we continued to treat some Canadian casualties, as the two armies were fighting close together and the lines of communication and evacuation were in proximity, and no distinction was made for medical purposes. There would be no need to question the [Canadian] Casualty Clearing Station with regard to closing down. It might have done but this would not be the reason for the path taken by you in the course of your evacuation and treatment. We normally admitted all head injuries for assessment to see whether the case was urgent and required operation in the field. Your case was obviously of extreme urgency as pressure from intracranial bleeding was building up and you would have died if operation had been delayed even by the hours necessary to fly you back to England.

After examining me following my admittance to #6 MNSU at 1820, RAMC Capt.

P.L.M. Hartley noted:

Rousable only with painful stimuli.....

Small rt. temporal penetrator.....

Motor System L hemiplegia complete

Sensory System L hemianaesthesia complete to P.P.

Reflexes L & R absent. Abdo present only on Rt

Pulse 58 falling to 52. This officer has probably got clot inside his skull causing pressure and should be operated upon fairly soon.

Dr. Eric A. Turner



Lt. (later Capt.) RAMC
No. 6 Mobile Neuro-Surgical Unit
Northwest Europe
1944-45



Retired Neurosurgeon
Birmingham, England
c. 1978

Concerning the actual operation, which commenced at 2000, the record reads:

Name of operator Capt. E. A. Turner

Anaesthetic employed *Local.

Dura. Torn? Yes Intact? _____

Brain. Bruised? _____ Lacerated? Yes Intact? _____

If infected? No evidence By what organism? _____

Penetrating R. temporal. Left hemiplegia arm and leg.

Other findings:--

No 6 Mobile Neuro-Surgical Unit

Operation 23/7/44

Scalp incision R. temporal region vertically to include and excise the small entrance wound-muscle excised and bone nibbled to expose normal dura. Considerable venous bleeding controlled by diathermy and muscle. Track cleared in upwards, backwrd and medial direction for 8 cm-grating felt at bottom with soft rubber catheter but not with sucker. F.B. not removed-CSF welled up freely here. Sulphathiozole powder-closure in layers with corrugated rubber drain in upper end of wound. P.O.P. cap. - all bone fragments came out with the superficial intracerebral clot which was under considerable tension. At the end of the operation the patient could move L. arm and leg. PR. R↓ L↑

What foreign bodies removed? Bone fragments.

Drainage? Corrugated rubber drain.

Signature E.A. Turner Capt.
No. 6 Mobile Neuro-Surgical Unit.

*Local instead of usual general anaesthetic would be used on occasion if there was urgency in an unconscious patient. (per E.A. Turner's June 7, 1988 letter to author)

The following constitutes an approximate reproduction of one of the medical documents which was completed after my operation.

No. 6 Mobile Neuro-Surgical Unit

Operation Card for Head Injuries

(For distribution to Casualty Clearing Stations, Stationary and Base Hospitals)

(Field Card No. W.3118B should be filled in before operation.)

No. 0-23710 Name FINLEY G.F. Rank Lt.

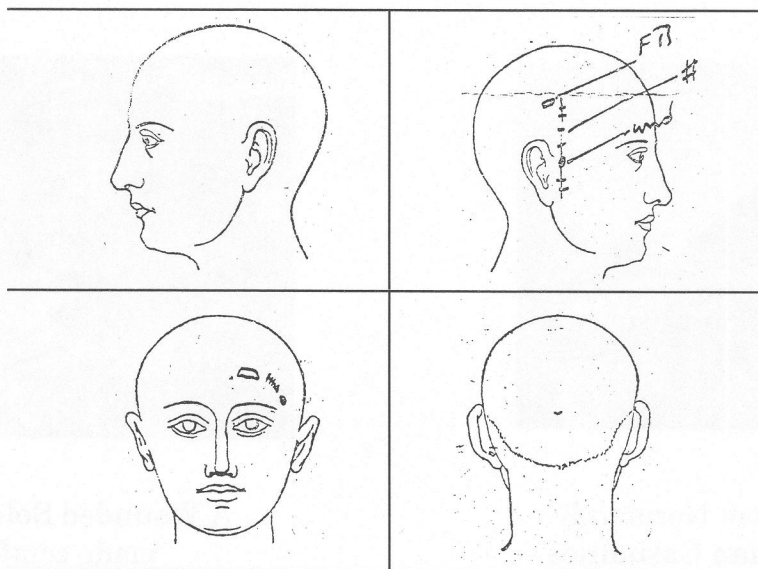
Unit R.C.N.V.R.

Date of operation 23/7/44. Time (in hours) between injury and operation 10 hrs

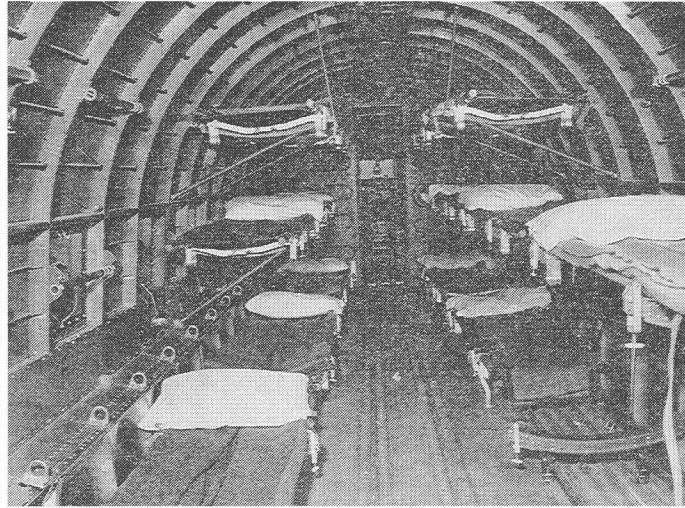
Situation of wounds (enter on diagrams) R. temporal

X-ray findings. Fracture? Yes F.B.? Yes Site of F.B.? R. temp. near mid-line

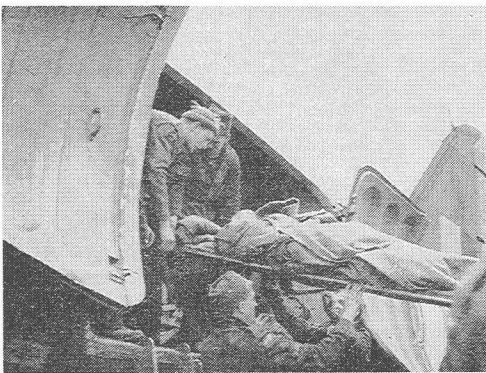
(Mark X-ray findings and diagrams)



AIR EVACUATION



Interior View of C-47 Dakota "SKYTRAIN" Aircraft
capable of carrying up to Twenty-Four reclining Patients



First Flights from Normandy
to UK of Canadian Casualties
began a Week after D-Day.
This scene occurred June 16.



A Wounded Soldier is being
made comfortable
by a Medical Orderly
prior to June 17 Flight to England

In his 7th June 1988 letter to me, Capt. Turner* reminisces:

With regard to the operation, this was clearly a matter of the greatest urgency. We did not wait for the routine x-ray of the skull, which was available in the vast majority of cases, and we did not apparently even wait for a general anaesthetic which again was the normal procedure. It seems obvious that you had lost consciousness before we operated and no delay was reckoned to be safe. You were apparently building up a dangerously high pressure from bleeding inside the head, and this was precisely the reason for our presence so near to the "front line".

After an initial penicillin dose of 100,000 units, during the next two days (July 24 and 25), I received 50,000 units every six hours. About 8 p.m. on the 25th I was transported as a "lying/severe" case from Bayeux to Reviers and then air-evacuated on a Douglas Dakota (C-47) to Down Ampney near Swindon in England. While head-injured British service personnel would be taken from there by special train to St. Hugh's College at Oxford, I travelled by ambulance to Basingstoke where the RCAMC ran Canada's Neurological and Plastic Surgery hospital. En route to Basingstoke, where we arrived at 0030, I recall -- my first memory since "conversing" with Medic Mo at #10 Field Ambulance some sixty hours previously -- having a horrendous headache, on the verge of vomiting, and being violently shaken about inside the vehicle.

Now before continuing with an account of medical treatment which I received after being admitted to the Canadian hospital at Basingstoke, certain events regarding the reporting of my being injured on July 23rd will be described. The only official record of the incident which I have thus far come across in the National Archives of Canada

*Dr. Eric A. Turner was a 25-year-old RAMC Captain when he operated on me. After serving in Europe until the Allied armies crossed the Rhine, he went to the Far East via India, arriving in Malaya just after Japan had been atomic-bombed. From 1951 to his 1977 retirement, he held a consultant post in Birmingham. In 1988, during a trip to UK for our son's wedding, I spent a couple of hours with him and Mrs. Turner on Sunday evening, July 29th -- forty-four years, to the very week, after our first tête-à-tête.

consists of NOIC JUNO's 242332B naval message to Admiralty (repeated CNMO, HMCS Niobe, FOBAA, PBM Nan White) which states:

Regret to report Lt. ERIC FALT[sic] FINLEY RCNVR "W" suffered head injury due to shrapnel p.m. July 23rd Admitted to hospital next of kin Mrs. M. ROSE[sic] FINLEY 3940 Cote Des Neiges Apt. B.101 Montreal Canada.

Whether either of the two Canadian addressees (CNMO or HMCS Niobe) subsequently informed NSHQ in Ottawa remains unknown, but Mrs. M. Ross Finley (my Mother and next of kin) never ever received any official notification. Which prompts the question as to why the Naval Order then applicable to reporting casualties (see page 29 above) was not carried out? Paragraph 4 reads:

Next of kin will be informed of such casualties by Naval Service Headquarters in all cases....

Since neither Mother nor anyone else could recall with certainty after the war when or from what source they first learned of my being wounded, the following provides some background as well as plausible explanations.

With "Thursday 20th July 1944 Somewhere in Normandy" written at the top of my Armed Forces Air Letter #27 to Mother, she would thus know, doubtlessly by the end of the month, that I had rejoined our Beach Commando "W" in France. In view of future developments, two particular comments in this letter warrant passing note. After "grub" on July 19, Jack Cronin and I drove to Bayeux and "stopped in at a Canadian Field Hospital where we met some darn fine nursing sisters. Jack & I are determined to return at our earliest opportunity". In another part of the letter, I call my not becoming engaged to my girlfriend back in Montreal as "... the best move by far. All the more so these days because one never knows what will turn up the next moment."

My own hunch is that word of my mishap reached Mother initially in Sqdr.Ldr. Bill Pentland's July 28th Air Letter to her from his RCAF fighter wing base in Normandy. Knowing somehow that our Commando was operating on JUNO sector beaches, Bill decided on his July 26 day-off to try and find me. Upon arrival at our location, he was dismayed to discover from Lt. Don Sutherland, Beachmaster for W-1 party, that three days previously I had been taken away for treatment of a gunshot head wound. The following day, after going through the records of several Casualty Clearing Stations in the area, Bill suddenly saw a list which noted that I had been shipped to a hospital on the outskirts of Bayeux. As his letter attests, enquiries at five British General Hospitals finally paid off:

I once more found Skip's name & purely by chance at the same moment, the doctor who had performed the operation. Evidently a very tiny piece of shrapnel had entered Skip's brain..... It is most probable that Skip will be now in the Canadian Neuro Hospital in Basingstoke...although no doubt you've had news by now.

Assuming that delivery of Air Letters to Canada from Normandy took no longer than ten days, Mother would receive Bill's letter by August 7th. Meanwhile, three other possible ways by which Mother first received the news, all of which took form during the first week of August, will be mentioned shortly.

At this point our narrative returns to July 26th, 0030 hours, the time of my arrival at BN & PS hospital in Basingstoke, unconscious and, as a result of the long trip from Normandy, apparently quite exhausted too. Bed 1 in Ward 20 became by latest home port. However, and despite my condition, at 0300 Lt. Col. E. Harry Botterell, who was the hospital's chief neurosurgeon, requested a laboratory examination of a swab

specimen from the wound. And over the next several days, besides continuing penicillin and sulphadiozine injections, many different lab examinations and skull x-rays were carried out.

Although neither a precise hour nor even day is noted on my medical records, I gather that regaining full and continuous consciousness was in my case a gradual process. By the end of July I evidently recalled that the very bed I was lying in had, only seven months previously, been occupied by F.O. Bob Pentland, RCAF, whose Spitfire crash-landing had left him a paraplegic for life. Around the same time I remember with some trepidation having to confront Medic Mo's physiotherapist wife, Gwen, whom I feared might get back at me for mistreating her husband when he and I shared a "state-room" aboard HMT Mauretania en route to UK in November 1943. (see PORTHOLES #3 and #8)

The July 27 laboratory report on the swab specimen collected a couple of hours after my arrival the previous day indicated the presence of "staphylococcus albustit" in the head wound. By this time Capt. W.D. Stevenson, the Medical Officer i/c Case, had received a reply to his July 26 X-Ray Requisition. This incidentally represented the first x-ray taken since I was injured on July 23. The radiologist, Major D.C. Eaglesham, gave the following as his clinical diagnosis:

SKULL:- There is a right parietal-squamous temporal cranial defect roughly semicircular and 5cm in its long dimension. This is obviously operative at the site of the injury. An intracranial metal Fb 5mmx15mmx10mm approx lies deep in the right hemisphere about 1cm from the mid line 6.5cm from the vertex and in the plane of the posterior margin of the defect.

Between the Fb and the defect nearer the former there is a small collection of gas intracranially. No pineal shadow and no loose or depressed bone fragments.

A week later, following a second x-ray, the radiologist reported that "The intracranial gas collection has now disappeared" and the Fb "is in the same position as at the last examination-26 July 44."

By now the plaster head cover and the corrugated rubber drain in the wound would both have been removed. On August 1st the records describe the patient as fully conscious, note the removal of sutures, and indicate the wound as being "well healed". In clinical terms I was described thusly:

- a). retained Fb in right hemisphere;
- b). left hemiparesis; and
- c). left hyperaesthesia.

In layman's language that meant:

- a). piece of metal in head.
- b). partial paralysis on left side of body;
- c). lack of sensation over left side of body.

So while I was still confined to bed, it was apparent that my overall condition had generally stabilized and soon afterwards I began having physiotherapy treatment on my left hand and fingers.

Meanwhile the first of August became a reverse "red-letter" day for me because one of the nurses (I like to imagine it was "Medic Mo"'s physiotherapist wife Gwen) kindly offered to write a letter home on my behalf. Herewith the contents of the Air-Letter:

B. N. + P. S. Hospital.
Basingstoke.
Hants.

Aug: 1st 1944.

Dearest Mother.

How is everybody at home? Fine I trust. This is my first attempt at dictating a letter. - since I was injured. Everything is going fine & you will be glad to see that I am at Bob's old abode - which means under the careful observation of Col. Botterell & Major Stewart. They were both interested in all your work for Bob & said they would be glad to add a note to tell how I am. It is just a bad crack on the right side of my head - behind the ear - by a piece of shrapnel - so my memory is a little blank still - details are not many. But the thing is I am feeling much better & should be up & around in four weeks. In any case I'll be sure to let you know of any important change. After a little physio-therapy I'll be able to write to you myself. Please tell Peggie I have by no means forgotten her & the same to the late Captain.

Cheerio for now & all my love.

Rip.

P.S. Tell Bob many of his old friends are asking about him.

3:30 is doing well & actually well be in a few days. His left arm & leg are not working very well yet but we anticipate considerable improvement. His memory is vague only for events immediately before & after the injury, is now again good. Please don't worry. Do give my regards to Bob Paulson. Harry Bottomore.

If anything is enclosed in this letter it will be sent by ordinary mail.

FROM:

(Sender's Reg't No., Rank and Name only)

Lieut. E. G. Finley.

This Armed Forces Air Letter cannot be accepted for registration.

Fold Here

273 11
267 & S/149

14 AUG 1944

Fold Here

Open Here

AIR MAIL

ARMED FORCES AIR LETTER

This letter must be posted in Armed Forces Postal channels. If posted in a Civil Post Office or pillar box, it will not be given air transmission.

TO:

1410 Lt. Ross Finley.

3940. Core-dee-Longue R.

Quebec.

Canada.



Aug: 1st 1944

B.N. & P.S. Hospital
Basingstoke, Hants.

Dearest Mother,

How is everybody at home? Fine I trust. This is my first attempt at dictating a letter - since I was injured. Everything is going fine & you will be glad to see that I am at Bob's old abode - which means under the careful observation of Col. Botterell & Major Stewart. They were both interested in all your work for Bob & said they would be glad to add a note to tell how I am. It is just a bad crack on the right side of my head - behind the ear - by a piece of shrapnel - as my memory is a little blank still - details are not many. But the thing is I am feeling much better & should be up and around in four weeks. In any case I'll be sure to let you know of any important change. After a little physio-therapy I'll be able to write to you myself. Please tell Peggie I have by no means forgotten her - & the same to the Mate [&] Captain.

Cheerio for now & all my love.

Skip

P.S. Tell Bob many of his old friends are asking about him

On the back page, the following is handwritten by the chief neurosurgeon:

Skip is doing well & actually will be up in a few days. His left arm & leg are not working very well yet but we anticipate considerable improvement. His memory is vague only for events immediately before & after the injury, & is now again good. Please don't worry. Do give my regards to Bob Pentland. Harry Botterell

[signed]

Whether Mother received this letter before Bill Pentland's or whether either of them informed her for the first time about my injury, no conclusive evidence has as yet been found. She may possibly have learned about it initially from one of two other sources. Having been contacted by the hospital administration and subsequently assured by Dr. Botterell personally that it was not another case of "crying wolf" (see PORTHOLE #9), brother Hart managed to get leave from instructing Spitfire pilots in northern England and came down to be with me from August 4-6. During his stay he apparently communicated with Mother because the opening sentence in my Aug.21 Air Letter to

her states: "Just rec'd your letter of Aug 10th saying you'd had word from Hart when he visited me".

The second source was Lt.(n) Jack Macbeth, RCNVR, whom we have already met (see PORTHOLE #4). One of the two original Assistant Beachmasters in "W"-3, Jack injured his shoulder during training and reverted to General Service where he joined Canadian MTBs. One day in early August when his boat was moored alongside a temporary jetty off JUNO beaches, he chanced to spot an RCN Beach Commando "W" member who told him about my mishap and whereabouts. Accordingly, as a navigator specialist and true friend, Jack appeared by my bunkside on August 7. His visit featured a couple of highlights. It marked the very first occasion of getting out of bed to go to the "head", being supported en route by a walker on my starboard side and by Jack to port. It also provided Jack with an opportunity to counter my having nicknamed him "Spider" after witnessing him hanging helplessly from the branch of a tree above a deep ravine as we negotiated an obstacle course during our commando training six months previously. On entering Ward #20 and spotting my totally shaven head, Jack slowly sauntered towards me and impishly exclaimed: "Ubangi"! Ever afterwards for him, such would be my sobriquet. Meanwhile, with respect to the matter at hand, I presume that even if Jack did subsequently write to Mother, it would unlikely comprise her first knowledge of the original incident. Thus, and as it pertains to all of the other mentioned possibilities as well, no definite answer can yet be given to our question: when, how, and in what form did Mother first hear about my injury?

As the days passed and *physiotherapy treatments increased, my interests and activities slowly diversified. From being simply a large ward with every bed occupied and continuously serviced by white-clothed RCAMC personnel, the scene gradually revealed itself as a collection of individual patients and human beings.

From whatever day it was when I regained continuous full consciousness and certainly before brother Hart or Jack "Spider" Macbeth had paid me their visits as outsiders, I recall having brief but not infrequent words with Capt. Wynne Baldwin (a native of St. Thomas, Ontario), the bed-ridden patient next to me. Like mine, his head was "Ubangi"-style clean-shaven, but he also had both eyes bandaged. As a member of a Canadian regiment attacking Caen, Wynne lost the sight in his right eye and stood to lose the left also. We became instant buddies and, up until our separation on account of his repatriation in October, spent endless hours together. Because he fortunately retained sight in his left eye, playing cribbage was added to walking as our second main leisure-time preoccupation. Just before his train left for Liverpool where he would board a troopship bound for Halifax, Wynne called out to me: "Don't forget our fishing date when you get back home, Skipper!"

Two other Basingstoke patients remain etched in my memory. One was Major Connie Smythe (an MC winner during WW I) who had been wounded on July 25th after serving for a fortnight with the RCA in Normandy. Connie of course will always be remembered at least by Canadian hockey buffs for his long association with the Toronto

*In passing it is interesting to note the following remarks which I wrote in an August 8th letter home to my physiotherapist mother: "The physiotherapy nurses here are v. good..... I wish you were here to give me my treatments - but don't think they aren't good. 3 of them do 600 cases a day. Very understaffed."

Maple Leafs. My recollection of him at BNPS, I'm afraid to say, may not sit well with his admirers or supporters. On being admitted to the Basingstoke hospital, he apparently promptly demanded and got a private room. Thereafter, besides continually complaining about poor service, he constantly gave unreasonable orders to the already over-worked staff. In fairness, perhaps, the foregoing "charges" should be tempered by making due allowance for the possibility that at the time the not-so-young major may quite possibly and simply have represented a typical case of "battle fatigue".

The second patient was a Canadian Army lieutenant whose name I have forgotten. He had received multiple shrapnel wounds in the Italian campaign and, having recovered sufficiently, was about to be discharged a couple of weeks after my arrival at BNPS. I recall that his wife, who had a military job in London and looked after their year-old son, used to visit her husband regularly. In coming to know the lieutenant better, I realized that the situation facing him and his wife was particularly poignant -- especially as of the day when not only was he scheduled for discharge from hospital but also did he receive notice to report forthwith to his unit. I often wonder how that family threesome subsequently fared.

Returning for the moment to a consideration of my physical condition at the time, it may be noted that as a result of appearing before a Medical Board on August 4, I was given the following PROVISIONAL PULHEMS GRADING:

Year of Birth	P	U	L	H	E	M	S
1923	5	5	5	1	1	1	1

The seven factors in the PULHEMS Profile reveal the physical, mental, and emotional capabilities of the individual as follows:

- P -- Physique -- This includes general development, capacity to acquire physical stamina with training. It is the individual's capacity for work. Under P is also included the cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive, and neurological (organic) systems.
- U -- Upper Extremity -- Functional use of hands, arms, shoulder girdle, and upper spine.
- L -- Lower Extremity -- Functional use of feet, legs, pelvis, and lower spine.
- H -- Ears and hearing.
- E -- Eyes and eyesight.
- M -- Mental capacity -- Intelligence.
- S -- Stability -- Emotional.

There are five grades under each factor, each grade being indicated by a figure, so that grades 1 to 5 embody the whole range of functional fitness.*

By the Canadian Army's Routine Order 3666, effective 1 October 1943, the PULHEMS Profile superseded the Category system which used letters -- "A", "B",....to "F"). With minor modifications other branches of Canada's Armed Forces as well as other Allied countries subsequently adopted the same system.**

Meanwhile during the first two weeks of August an interesting and informative exchange of correspondence was taking place between Dick Johnstone, our Beach Commando C.O. in Normandy and Saurin Brooke, CNMO's Staff Officer (Combined

*W.R. Feasby, Official History of the Canadian Medical Services, 1939-1945, Ottawa: Queen's Printer. Vol.Two, 1956, p.417.

**Ibid., Vol.One, pp. 502 & 503.

Operations) in London. In his Aug.7 letter to Saurin, Dick enquired as to what hospital I had been finally taken. Having received Dick's letter four days later, Saurin's Aug.14 reply states in part:

Dear Johnstone, Very many thanks for your note, which was the first we had heard from "W" aside from the casualty report on Finley. The latter is at Basingstoke Neurological and Plastic Surgery Hospital, according to the latest reports. Charlie Bond was in there with him for a while and said that Finley, still paralyzed down one side and suffering from severe headaches, seemed reasonably cheerful. Finley was of the opinion that the paralysis was only temporary.*

That my condition was gradually improving is indicated by these handwritten Aug.8 remarks to Mother:

This is my first attempt at a letter. Feeling much better, & Col. Botterrell [sic] says I've astounded all the medical men here with my progress. Spent all yesterday (about 1½ hours) in a wheel chair so I'm really coming along. It was great having Hartland with me for a few days. Very surprised to have Jack Macbeth visit me yesterday. He's on an M.T.B. & ran into some of our unit in France - ran into some bad shelling a few days ago..... Rough luck.

My left arm is coming on fine, & the left leg has begun to move. Why I'll be walking in no time..... The old memory is still pretty hazy but it'll come back too. Did you know that all of the stitches are out of my head now, & looks like a good job - when my hair grows back I doubt if the scar will show..... Please don't worry because I feel like a draft dodger beside some of these fellows who are in grim shape.

August 12 must have been a particularly happy day for me because it brought the very first communications from the home front since my Normandy injury three weeks previously. Both communications consisted of cables. One, signed "STEWART", was obviously from my "supposed" girl-friend (whom we have already met -- see p.39) and would have been quite welcomed. The other, signed "PEG FINLEY", while probably even

*Lt. C.R. Bond, RCNVR, was C.O. of LCI(L) 118 in the 2nd Canadian Flotilla. He was wounded during the June 1944 Normandy landings.

more welcome, caused me not a little concern on first reading.

Concern centered on the fact that while Peggy Muir was my No.1 girl-friend back home in Canada at the time -- indeed we were all but officially engaged -- I wondered why she had signed her name as PEG FINLEY on the cable. The whole affair soon resolved itself, as my Aug.13 letter to my aunt, Mrs. G.W. Birks, explains:

Can't tell you how glad I was to receive your cable yesterday. The first copy I got was signed "PEG FINLEY". Needless to say I was a little startled, not knowing whether I had married her by proxy during my unconsciousness or what. However the original copy "PEG / FINLEYS / BIRKS" solved the mystery.

On Aug.15 I was discharged from BNPS Hospital and sent by stretcher in an ambulance to #23 Canadian General Hospital at Leavesden, near Watford, at the north end of the London "tube" system. Lt.Col. Botterell's medical notes state:

14 Aug.44. Patient is up & about & conscious, alert & cooperative. X-Rays show intra-cranial gas to have disappeared. Has retained M.F.B.. Has residual left hemi-paresis with sensory deficit of cortical type most marked in leg. No facial weakness but medium grasp nystagmus to left persists. 23/7/44. S.W. H.E. E.A. Rt. temporal region - with lac of brain & retained M.F.B.. Primary union and still recovering from hemiplegia with sensory deficit of cortical type. For transfer to Watford Gen. Hosp.

Under "Recommendation" on Hospital Discharge Notification dated 15 Aug., Major W.L. Boulter, Registrar, states:

BOARDED: Category "D" - PULHEMS: P.5, U.5, L.5 -STRETCHER-TRANSFERRED TO: #23 C.G.H.

The move to Ward #32 in the Leavesden hospital prompted the following comments in my letter to Mother next day:

Simply had to write you this aft as I was up walking for the first time. Really feels great, & tho' the boys say it's a mixture between a rhumba & a new shuffle all of my own, it'll soon be as good as ever. All I have to do now is get rid of my paralysis (that is no feeling, altho' my leg & arm are strong) on my left side, grow a little hair, & I'll have a hard time convincing people I was ever hurt.

We left Basingstoke yesterday & am now not far from London just waiting to come home - probably less than 8 weeks. Rec'd two letters from you, 2 from Peg., & one from the Mate [Mrs. Birks] just before we left, the first I'd had, & it really was great. All the doctors & nurses were absolutely thrilled to hear about Bob [Pentland] in his wheel chair & all send their v best.....Just a matter now of resting the old beano as headaches are numerous & come easy, & then the trip home.

If today's memory serves me correctly, after being about a week at Leavesden Hospital I was reassigned to a bed in the ground-level, "out-door" extension of our Ward #32. The need to construct and use such temporary extensions was doubtlessly due to the ever-increasing number of Canadian war casualties coming from the European theatres at the time. As I recall, the extension had a curved sheet-metal roof (similar to that of the nissen hut) and retractable, heavy-duty canvas sidings. Since beds in this area were assigned only to ambulatory patients who could make their own beds and generally look after themselves, being transferred indicated that my walking ability had improved.

During the remainder of August, my routine included regular physiotherapy sessions, daily walks and cribbage games with Wynne Baldwin, and letter-writing. With respect to the latter, I frequently mentioned two particular factors in letters home -- one, that my memory was almost non-existent; and two, that there wasn't much improvement in the feeling on my left side. All the while I received several letters and parcels from both family and friends, for which I was always most appreciative.

Meanwhile, Jack "Spider" Macbeth arrived unexpectedly one day to inform me that RCN Beach Commando had returned to Cowes from Normandy on August 23 and disbanded a week later. It was good news to learn that they suffered no further serious casualties in their seven-week stint on JUNO sector beaches.

The next formal assessment of my condition occurred at Leavesden Hospital on Aug. 28. On a four-page, nineteen-section "Medical History of an Invalid" form, the following statements appear under the noted sections:

#4. Personal description: (a) Height 6' 0" (b) (i) Weight on enlistment, stripped:- 155
(ii) Present weight, stripped:- 145

#8. Present Condition

(a) Subjective (in the individual's own words) I have no sense of feeling on my left side. I have difficulty in walking correctly. I am unable to fully open my mouth. I have headaches pretty well all day.

(b) History of present disability. ...F.B. still evident. Has residual left hemiparesis with sensory deficit of cortical type - nystagmus to left persists.....Awaiting repatriation.

Section #9, which is undated, gives Capt. J.A. Ritchie's initials as those of the examining officer and my signature as having heard the contents of Sections 8(a) and (b) read and being satisfied with them.

#10. Present condition.

Extremities - right upper and lower normal. Left shows hemiparesis (see specialist's report) with exaggerated reflexes. No appreciable atrophy but joint sense and space appreciation absent. Sensory loss gone upper and lower extremities.

P-5; U-1; L-1; H-1; E-1; M-1; S-1.

[N.B. These "U", "L", & "E" gradings are different from those given by Capt. Ritchie above].

#11. Were the diseases or injuries caused or aggravated:

(a) By intemperance or improper conduct No
(b) By unreasonable refusal to accept treatment No

- #12. What is the probable future duration of the disease or injuries? Indefinite
- #13. Is further treatment in hospital, convalescent home, etc, likely to be of material benefit?
(If the answer is "yes" state nature of treatment required and probable duration.)
Yes. Further convalescence essential. Should be repatriated.
- #14. Can the former civilian trade, profession or occupation be resumed?
(If not, briefly state why)
No - existing hemi-pareisis
- #15. Recommendations
That he be brought before medical board for assessment of rating.

At this point (bottom of third page) the form is dated 28 Aug 44 and signed by J.A. Ritchie, Capt., RCAMC as "Medical Officer by whom the case is brought forward".

- #16. (a) Does the Board concur with the preceding report?
If not give differing opinions with reasons.
we concur
- (c) Category or Profile. P-5; U-1; L-1; H-1; E-1; M-1; S-1
- #17. Recommendation of Medical Board:
(a) Does require treatment (give the nature of treatment or convalescence required and probable duration)
Requires long convalescence for this head injury
- (b) Does not require treatment. Walking

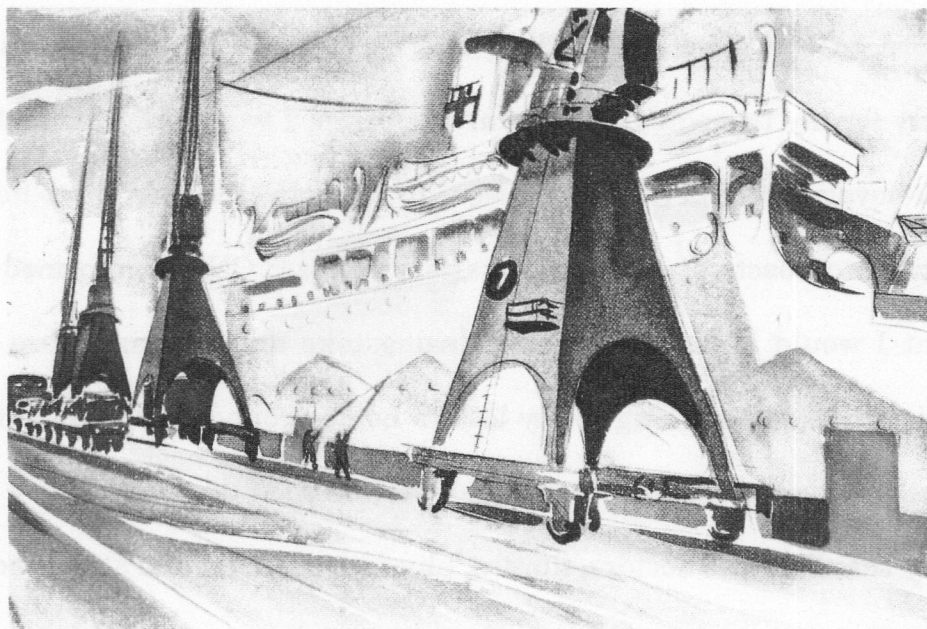
M.B. Perrin, Lt.-Col.	RCAMC, President
T.S. Perrett, Major }	RCAMC Members
S.K. Mager, Major }	

Place Leavesden Military Hospital
Date 31 Aug 44

As a consequence, on Aug.28 form MFB227 for my repatriation was also completed and supposedly forwarded to CNMO for action. With the prospect of soon sailing back to Canada and having bidden farewell to my walking and cribbage partner Wynne, who had just received orders to board a Canada-bound, HM Troopship in Liverpool, I myself must have been on a "high" that day. Playing the averages and with any luck, my draft should occur within a few weeks -- certainly by the beginning of October.

But alas! Such was not to be the case. By mid-September three troopers, all carrying large numbers of Canadian war casualties, had made the UK-Halifax crossing and I began to despair of ever being selected as a passenger. Around this time I paid my first visit to CNMO in London since being wounded for the purpose (as I wrote in a Sep.8 letter to Mother) of giving "the naval authorities hell for not notifying you" of my injury. The next sentence reads: "I'd hate like ---- to think they've not notified the [next-of-kin of] others".

The torpedo that almost sank the ship struck shortly after when, while chatting informally with a CNMO staff member in the London office on Sep.18, it was discovered that none of my repatriation papers could be found anywhere. In the following four weeks, as the search for the "missing" documents proceeded, two new developments occurred. First -- on Sep. 19 I transferred from #23 CGH at Leavesden to No.1 N.E.T.D. (Non-Effective Transit Depot) at Thursley in Surrey. Administered by the Lorne Scots and known as Tweedsmuir Camp, this Depot provided minimal-medical accommodation mainly for Canadian military personnel awaiting repatriation. Second -- on Oct.2 I



Canadian Hospital Ship "Lady Nelson"
berthed at Avonmouth, England
Nov. 14, 1943



IN YOUR REPLY REFER TO FILE NO.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Physiotherapy Department,
Queen Mary Veterans Hospital,
Montreal, P.Q.
10th March 1953.

Mrs. N. Ross Finley,
Charge Physiotherapist,
Physiotherapy Department,
St. Annes Military Hospital,
St. Anne de Bellevue, P.Q.

Dear Mrs. Finley,

It is with great regret that we accept
your resignation, but fully appreciate your wish to do so.

On behalf of the Department of Veterans
Affairs may I thank you for your selfless devotion to the
profession of Physiotherapy both during the War Years when
you established the Department at St. Annes and during the
past three years when you returned to help and stayed to
steer the same Department through many difficulties. Our
appreciation of what you have achieved for the Patients as
well as the Staff cannot be adequately expressed.

Our best wishes are extended to you for
the future.

Yours sincerely,

G. Gower-Rees

G. GOWER-REES, M.C.S.P., C.P.A.,
Advisor in Physiotherapy.

GGR/mf

One of Mother's
several
subsequent
Testimonials

P.S. Just a personal "Thank you" *love*
G. Gower-Rees

received word to the effect that, since the Canadian Government could not take responsibility for my travelling by regular troopship, I would have to make the trans-Atlantic sea-voyage on either "Lady Nelson" or "Letitia", Canada's two hospital ships.

In order to reactivate my repatriation process, CNMO informed me in mid-October that I would have to return to Basingstoke and appear before another (my third!) medical board. According to my letters home around this time, while obviously miffed about the inconvenience, I nevertheless welcomed the opportunity of being able to personally thank all the doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, and staff who had treated me so well and so successfully between July 26 and August 15. In return many of the medical personnel asked me to convey to Mother their high praise for all the wonderful work being done for Canadian war casualties by her Physiotherapy Department at the Ste. Anne de Bellevue military hospital near Montreal.

Utilizing the same format as previously (see p.61), the following comprise the relevant statements which appear in selected sections of my "Medical History of an Invalid" form which was completed at Basingstoke between Oct. 19 and 26.

#4. Personal description: (a) Height 6' 0" (b) (i) Weight on enlistment, stripped:- 155
(ii) Present weight, stripped:- 145

#8. Present Condition

(a) Subjective (in the individual's own words) 'I walk with a limp in my left leg. The feeling in my left leg and arm is not normal. The strength in my left arm is not as good as formerly. I occasionally have a peculiar feeling of pressure in my right ear. I cannot open my mouth to the same extent as before the injury.'

(b) History of present disability

23 July 44- SW(HE)EA-88 mm-France-Penetrating wound rt. temporal with left hemiparesis-unconscious-Retrograde amnesia momentary, post traumatic amnesia 3 days with islands of memory 'during the amnesic period'. Operated same day 6 MNSU. Debridement of wound, removal indriven bone and pulped brain. Metallic foreign body not removed. 26 July 44. Admitted BN & PS Hosp. Drain in wound removed. X-ray shows small collection of gas intracranially. Moves left arm & leg, though obviously weak. No other abnormal neurological findings, save for sensory deficit of cortical type most involved in left leg.

Section #9, dated 19 Oct.44., gives Capt. L.L. Bernstein's initials as those of the examining officer and my signature as having heard the contents of Sections 8(a) and (b) read and being satisfied with them.

- #10. Present condition... Young officer, intelligent, good type. Head & neck - rt. temporal, wound well healed, not tender; cranial defect about 2 cm. diameter palpable-not tense or bulging. Pupils equal, react to light, fundi normal, remainder cranial nerves intact (save for hypaesthesia left side face).
Extremities:- Has a left hemiparesis which is worse in leg than arm, though there is good power in each, but subnormal. Left extremities feel colder and sweatier than right. Deep reflexes active bilaterally, but increased on left side. No clonus present. Abdominal present both sides, but diminished on left. Plantar stimulation left side produces no response. On right is definitely flexor sensory. There is hypaesthesia on the whole of the left side of the body including the face.

P-5; U-5; L-5; H-1; E-1; M-1; S-1. Naval Category 'D'.

[N.B. The "5" gradings for "U" & "L" replace the "1" gradings given on Aug.28 by the previous Medical Board.]

Sections #11 and #12 have identical comments to those made in the Aug.28 report (see pp.61-62 above). After an answer of "yes" is given to Section #13's question, the nature of treatment required is described as "Physiotherapy and neurological supervision". "Uncertain" is the answer made to Section #14's question as to whether the invalid's

former civilian occupation can be resumed. Finally, under Section #15, entitled "Recommendations", we read: "Refer to Medical Board". At this point (bottom of third page) the form is dated 19 Oct.44. and signed by L.L. Bernstein, Capt., RCAMC, as "Medical officer by whom the case is brought forward".

On page four of the form, we find the following sections and their comments:

#16. (a) Does the Board concur with the preceding report?

If not give differing opinions with reasons

We concur

(b) Final Diagnosis with Code No.

Same 4001, 4050

(c) Category or Profile. Berth

YOB	P	U	L	H	E	M	S
23	5	5	5	1	1	1	1

Naval Category 'D'

#17. Recommendation of Medical Board:

Physiotherapy and neurological supervision

E.H. Botterell, Lt Col.	RCAMC,	President.
O.W. Stewart, Major	RCAMC	Members.
L.L. Bernstein, Capt.	RCAMC	

Place Basingstoke, Hants

Date 20 Oct 44

#18. TO BE COMPLETED WHEN TREATMENT IS REFUSED

[N.B. This section is blank]

#19. APPROVED BY

CONFIRMED BY
(when indicated)

Date OCT 26 1944

R.M. Luton
Major General
Director of Medical Services
Canadian Military Headquarters

How London escaped buzz-bombs

By John LeBlanc

LONDON (CP) — Shortly before dawn on June 13, 1944, a small machine looking like a toy airplane sped over the Kent coastline from the Channel.

It spat flame and gave off a rhythmic throbbing noise that was to rasp the nerves of war-weary Londoners for the next nine months. For it also carried a ton of random death.

When a Royal Observer Corps watcher spotted it 25 years ago and shouted the code word "Diver" into his telephone, he signalled the arrival of Hitler's Vengeance Weapon No. 1. The V-1 was one of the Fuehrer's last despairing throws of the dice to halt the Allies who had just landed in Normandy.

Britons more informally called it the doodlebug or the buzz-bomb. It was to kill 6,138 of them—mostly civilians—and seriously injure 17,239 before invasion forces crowded in on launching places in France, Belgium and The Netherlands.

Too late

It caused some loss of worker efficiency and production from snapping nerves and the diversion of perhaps 100,000 tons of bombs from other Nazi targets to launching and production installations. But it was too late and too little.

The flying bomb developed in secret was a monoplane with a wing span of 16 feet and an over-all length of 25 feet. Launched from a ramp—later from planes as land sites grew scarcer—it was powered by a simple jet engine and had a top speed of about 280 miles an hour and a range that went up to 250 miles in its later stages.

A magnetic compass actuated an automatic pilot to keep it flying straight. When a windmill in the nose had made a pre-set number of revolutions, a mechanism shut off the engine and sent it into a dive sideways.

Kent on edge

It was this characteristic that kept Londoners on edge during the era of the doodlebug.

Listeners could hear its distinctive pulsating buzz for miles and would hold their breaths until it passed overhead. If the droning stopped suddenly, everyone in earshot dived for shelter.

As a rough rule, the aiming point of the bombs was Tower Bridge about two miles down the Thames from the Houses of Parliament. But there was such a margin of error that the doodlebugs fell like scatter-shot. The first one, for instance, dropped 20 miles short of target.

The most damage, in fact, was concentrated in Penge, a quiet suburb seven miles south of the bridge where every one of the 6,000 old houses was either damaged or destroyed and one in every 20 persons was either killed or injured.

Since 1942 London and Washington had been receiving reports from inside Nazi territory about the development of pilotless bomb-carrying aircraft and the rocket missiles that were to materialize later as the V-2.

In 1943 an experimental V-1 fell in Denmark and, before the Germans arrived to snatch it up, a Dane sketched it and got the picture through to the British.

About the same time, a French Resistance member named Michel Hollard, pos-

ing as a Huguenot church welfare worker handing out tracts to French conscripts working on a mysterious project in the Pas de Calais, got details of 100 launching sites pointed at London and smuggled them to the British embassy in neutral Switzerland.

Saved London

The Allies plastered them with bombs and after the war Lt-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks, a distinguished commander and post-war military historian, saluted Hollard as "the man who literally saved London."

But thousands played a part in damping down the effects of the V-1. Anonymous office workers interpreting air reconnaissance photographs had a key role.

Meanwhile, information kept coming in about hundreds of installations that looked like up-ended skis—they were launching ramps—growing up along the Nazi-held Channel coast. The Allies kept bombing them until by the end of 1943 most had been hit.

Modified sites

But the Germans kept rebuilding them with the help of expendable conscript labor until, by the time of the first onslaught, 68 modified and less-vulnerable installations had been located.

By this time, too, a game of spy and counter-spy was well under way.

In England, information that the V-1 was to be the next weapon was so solid that defences of barrage balloons, anti-aircraft guns and fighter-plane protection had been lined up in the paths of the missiles toward London.

Across the Channel, Col. Max Wachtel of Flag Regiment 155W, the man in charge of the whole program

of firing the buzz-bombs, knew that counter-intelligence was at work and went to comic-opera lengths to circumvent it.

Convinced that British agents were out to kill him, he changed his name, grew a beard, and got permission to wear any German uniform he chose. Once he changed his headquarters with such elaborate secrecy that it lost touch with its laundry and the personnel went for weeks without clean clothes.

After the flying-bomb offensive opened, British authorities set their minds to trying to fool the enemy into diverting the weapons from the thickly populated London area.

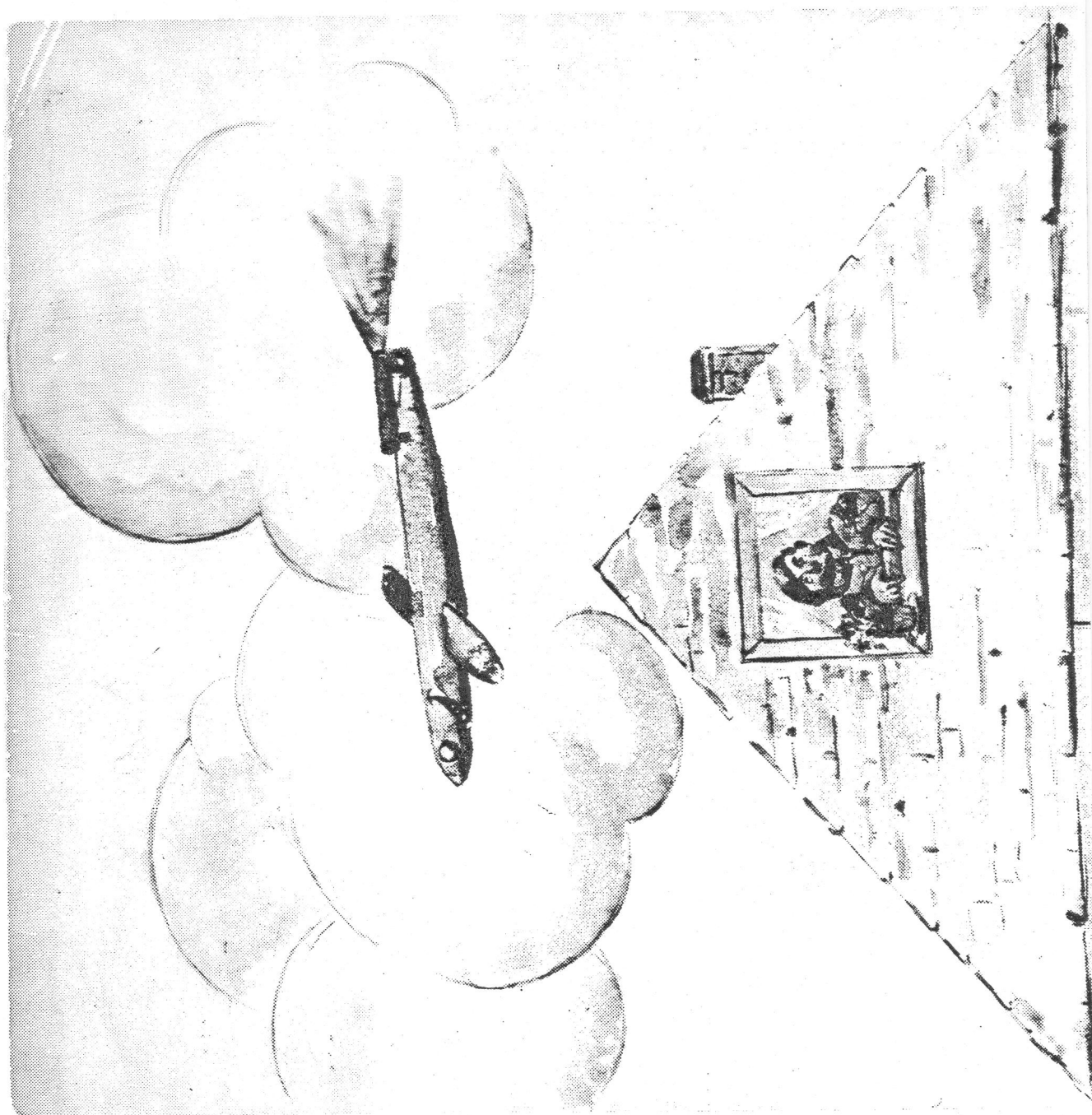
A proposal went before the cabinet for leaking out misdirection, by means of a flood of false death notices in London newspapers, to suggest that the buzz-bombs were overshooting London in the hope that they would be adjusted to fall short in the countryside.

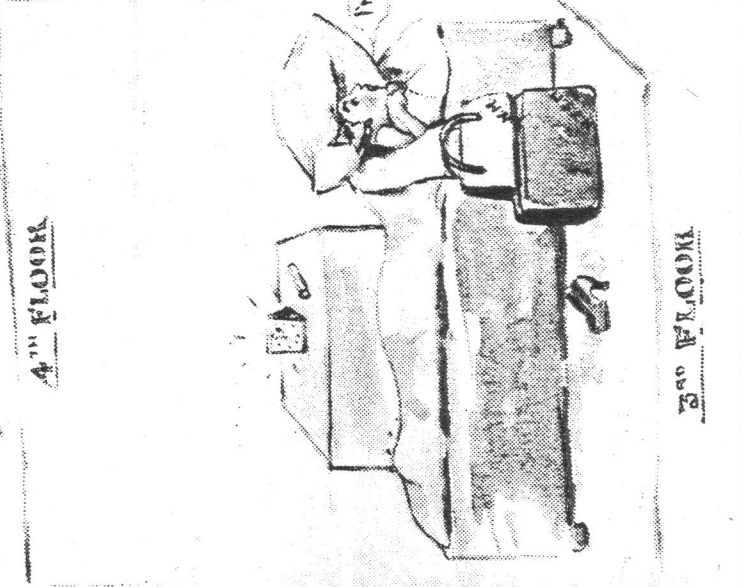
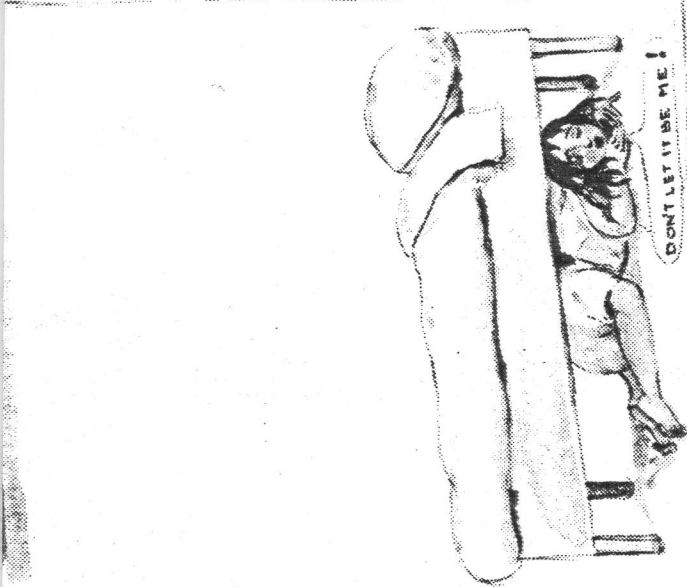
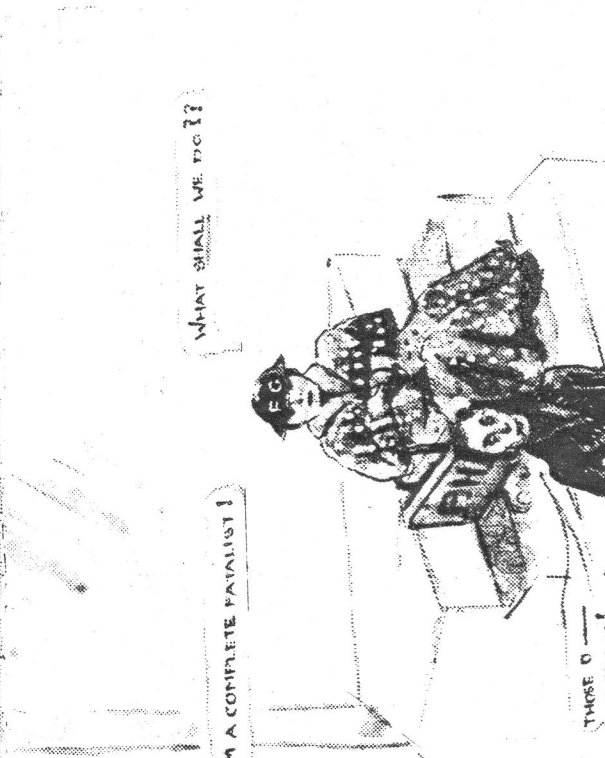
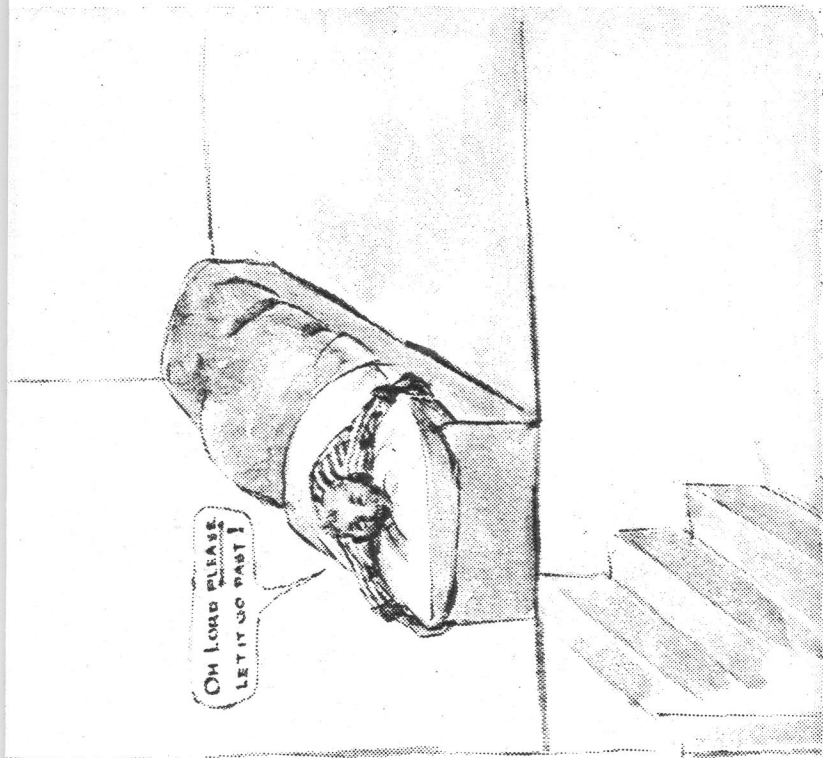
But the idea of possibly killing some people outside London to save a larger number of lives in the capital precipitated an anguished moral crisis among the ministers.

"Who are we to act as God?" cried Herbert Morrison, the minister of home security.

The cruel decision was taken out of the cabinet's hands when the buzz-bombs started falling short in large numbers.

What came out only much later was that the wily Col. Wachtel thought he had an agent planted in the ministry of information to report results. Counter-intelligence obligingly provided reports persuading the colonel to shorten the range.

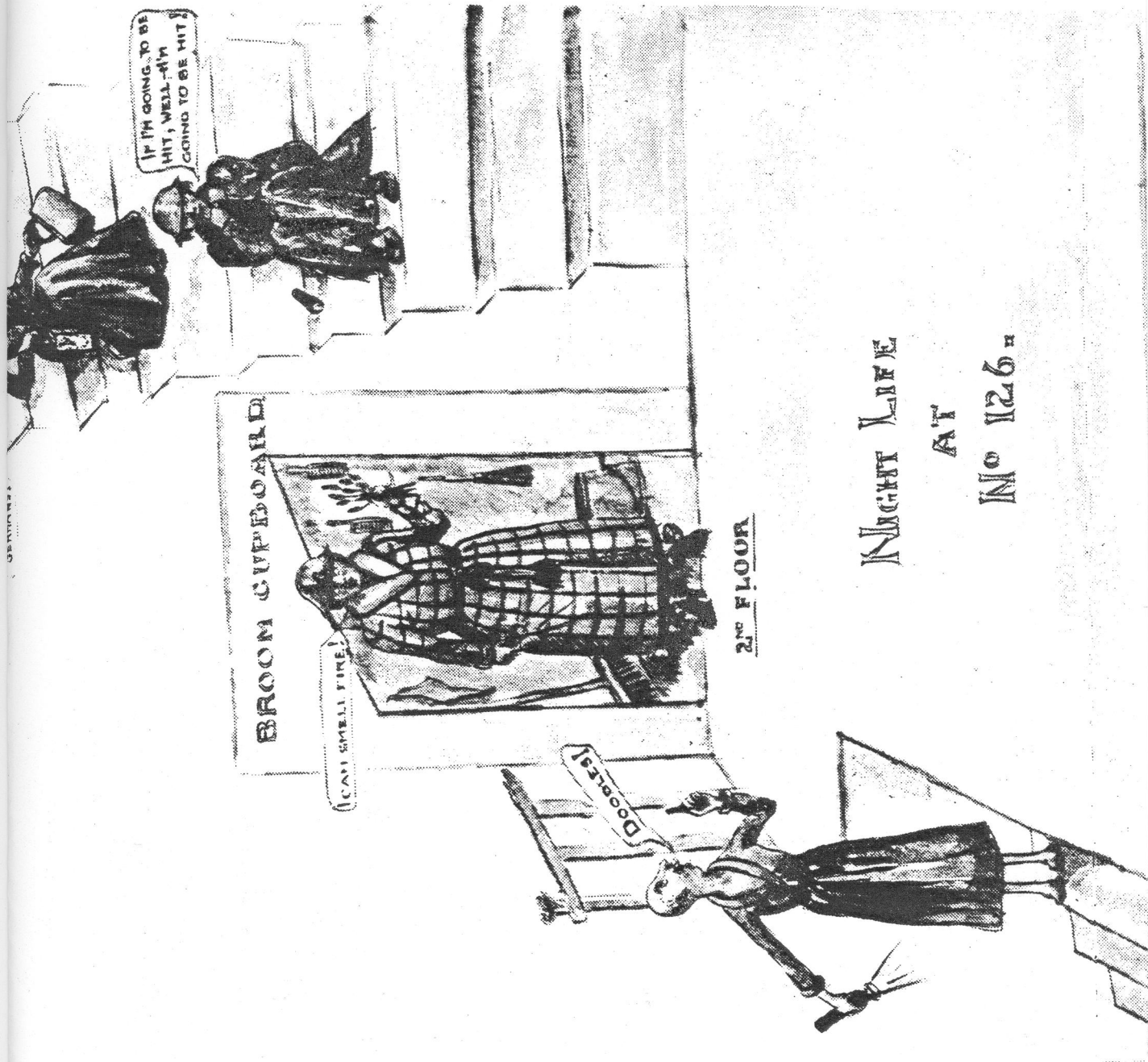


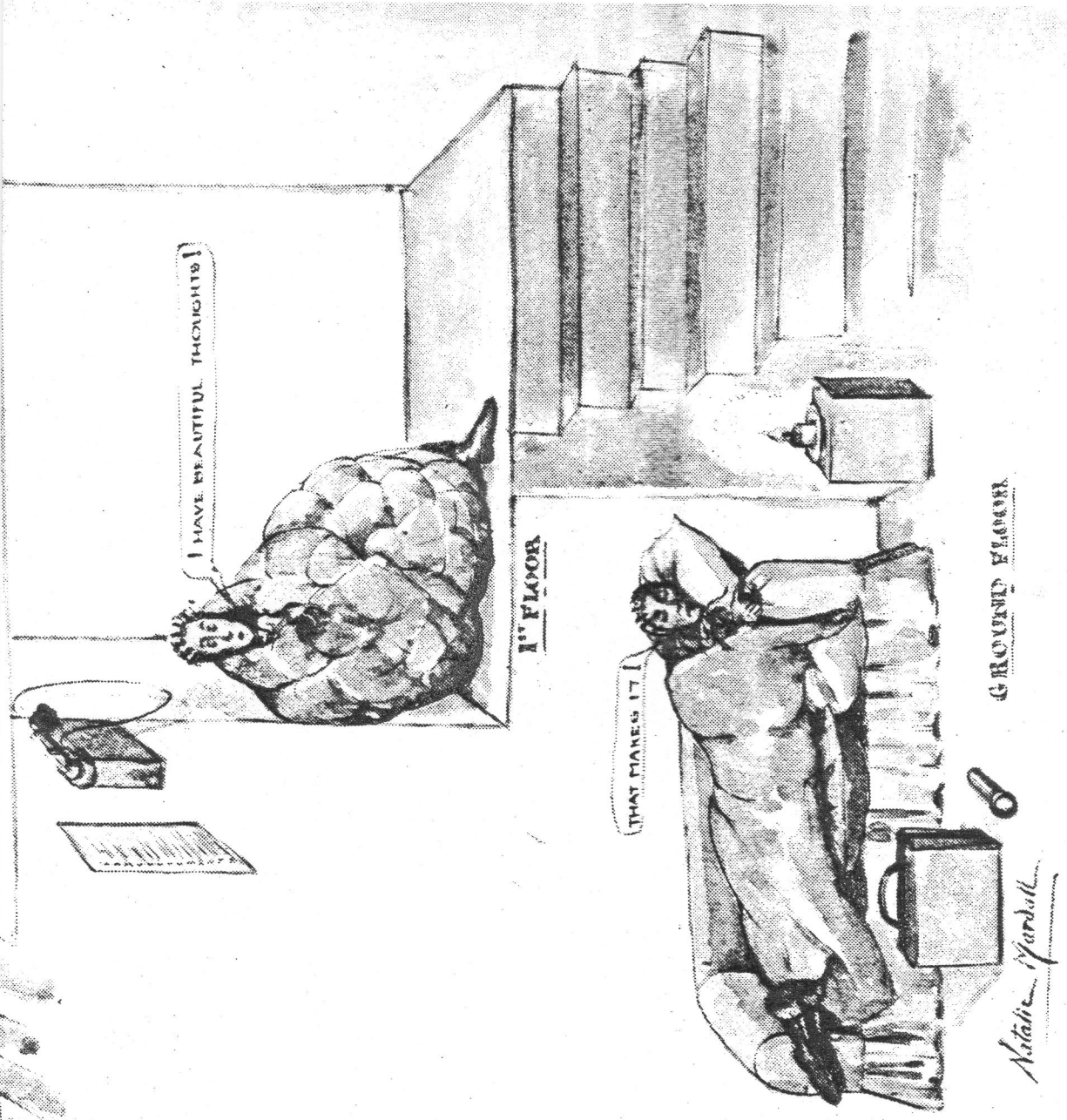


4TH FLOOR

3RD FLOOR

THOSE D —





So now it became simply a matter of putting in time waiting for the day when my name would appear on the passenger list for either of Canada's two main hospital ships. While letter-writing constantly consumed many an hour (and, incidentally, also proved subsequently to comprise an invaluable historical record), I spent several days visiting people and places around or near London. The only quasi-official restriction placed upon my peregrinations was the requirement of keeping in close touch with N.E.T.D. at Thursley to find out if my draft had arrived.

One particularly memorable occasion was the day I flew as a passenger in a four-engine Halifax III bomber piloted by Frank Harris (an RCAF flight-lieutenant) on a 600-mile flight along the south coast of England. Another enjoyable event took place on Oct.5 when Hart and I spent the whole evening at London's Queensbury Club where hundreds had gathered to see, hear, and dance to Glenn Miller's popular swing band. Less than three months later, unfortunately, while en route to Paris to put on a series of Christmas concerts for Allied service personnel, forty-year-young Glenn, leader of the American Band of the A.E.F., was killed when his plane apparently crashed into the ocean. A third pleasant memory recalls watching two RCAF war artists -- Carl Schaeffer and Bob Hyndman -- at work around mid-October in their Lincoln's Inn Fields, London studio. Carl, with the nickname of "Uncle Wiggly", had been a much maligned and under-appreciated art teacher at my pre-war secondary school. Bob, if I remember correctly, was actually on rest leave at the time from his fighter squadron.

On the roof of RCAF Headquarters
20 Lincoln's Inn Fields
Holborn, London
Oct. 14, 1944



Skip and, at right,
RCAF war artist F/L C.F. Schaefer



The older Finley brothers and, at right,
RCAF war artist F/L R.S. Hyndman



Hart snaps Skip
in
Norfolk Hotel
South Kensington
London
Oct. 12, 1944



Getting dressed
(note "long johns"!)

On third-floor balcony



Taken from our hotel-room window, this snapshot shows
damage caused by a German V-1 "BUZZ BOMB"
(also called "DOODLEBUG")
which exploded upon landing just hours before we registered,
Oct. 10, 1944

In the early years of World War II when the Germans were carrying out massive and unrelenting air raids on London, the British Government implemented an extensive program of evacuating young children particularly. As part of this program, many children went to live with Canadian families. The G.W. Birks family of Montreal, with whom I myself had lived since 1932, took care of three twelve-year-old boys -- John Gray, Philip Banister, and Nigel Chapman -- all of whom came from the Greater London area. While awaiting repatriation, I managed to meet and visit with their respective mothers and fathers, and must acknowledge the warm and generous manner in which each of the three pairs of parents always treated me.

Before continuing on to describe the subsequent medical and repatriation details which will bring this "PORTHOLE" to its logical conclusion, a not insignificant topic begs for centre-stage attention. Sub-titled "All the nice girls love a sailor", there follows herewith a condensed account of my "love life" during the year-long period under consideration. Looking back from today's 1994 perspective, I recall all my male/female (and male/male) relationships, from earliest boyhood onwards, as always having been quite natural and normal. The mini-portholes set forth below provide brief sketches of my perception of the interrelations which I experienced between 1943 and 1944 with the five young ladies whom, at various times, I considered to be my Number 1 girlfriend.



Mr. & Mrs. G.W. Birks, their family,
Cocker Spaniel pooch, "Taffy of Monk Bretton",
and, at right,
the three boys evacuated from England
(top to bottom): John, Nigel, Philip
Montreal 1940

Ship Ahoy!

Written by
A.J. MILLS.

All the nice Girls love a Sailor.

Composed by
BENNETT SCOTT.

Moderato con spirito.

Piano.

1. Elizabeth Stewart. A cute and popular young Montrealer, Betty was dated regularly throughout World War II by servicemen and civilians alike. For several months after his 1942 arrival in Britain for fighter-pilot training, my brother Hartland continued to claim Betty as his #1, as did I for awhile in 1943. And she doubtlessly had many other suitors as well. (In passing, it might be suggested that generally speaking the single serviceman wanted to have a girlfriend back home, of whom he had a picture, with whom he carried on reciprocal correspondence, and about whom he could brag to his chums.) While "greener pastures" subsequently lured all three of us, I must admit that several future occasions arose when, with more than mere nostalgia, I recalled how, as our lips neared, Betty would always whisper "only a hair's breadth" just before we consummated a full osculatory embrace. The cable she sent to me after hearing of my injury was most likely a simple friendship gesture (prompted by my having written at length to her several months earlier when her only brother Donnie, a pilot in the RCAF and a good friend of mine, had been killed in action) because she evidently thought that I was engaged at the time to Peggy Muir (see mini-porthole #5 below).

2. Alexandrina Grant Nicholson. Petite and possessed of boundless energy, "Sexy little Lexie", as RCN Beach Commando "W" affectionately dubbed her, served in the WRNS at our HMS Armadillo training base at Ardentinn on Loch Long in Scotland throughout the winter of 1943-44. Being the natural leader of an RN "Wren" quartette (Bambi, Blondie and Mary McDade comprising the other three) who delighted in waking us daily into the 6 a.m. darkness, her Glaswegian accent amused us all generally and her charming personality won my attention particularly. After having her as a partner

MISS EDGAR'S AND MISS CRAMP'S SCHOOL
Westmount, P.Q.

BETTY STEWART
*"Unthinking, idle, wild and
young,
She laughed and danced and
talked and sung."*

"Bette" has endeared herself to us all by her helpful nature and cheerful smile. Energetic in her ways, she has given much of her time to the Junior Red Cross as Vice-President. She excels in all sports, especially in skating and skiing and has proved herself to be a valuable member of the Ski-Team for the last four years. Betty has been with us ten years and throughout that time she has always been kind and thoughtful.

Activities: Capt. 2nd. Basketball Team '39-'40, '40-'41; Editorial Board of the "Beaver Log", '40-'41; Vice-President of Red Cross '40-'41; Ski-Team, '38-'39, '39-'40, '40-'41, '41-'42.



"THE BEAVER LOG"
School Yearbook, 1941-1942

HMS ARMADILLO, Winter 1943-44



RN Wren "Bambi" escorted by Ken Crowhurst (left),
Don Sutherland (right) and Jack Macbeth

(and teacher) on several occasions, I can vouch that never again did I ever enjoy Scottish dancing as much. When the day came for our unit to leave Ardentinnny, Lexie's parting words to me sounded like: "Farewell, ye cheeky boonder!"

3. Barbara Crossley. Shortly after RCN Beach Commando "W" moved south in mid-February from HMS Armadillo in Scotland to HMS Mastodon at Exbury in the New Forest, I met Billie at a dance in nearby Beaulieu where she worked as a "Wren" in the local naval establishment. Participating in virtually no Combined Operations training exercises during our entire six-week stay in HMS Mastodon, we consequently had much time off. Letters home for this period indicate that Billie and I spent many an enjoyable hour together; and the following diary entry even includes a touch of humour: "Feb. 29-marvellous dance at Lepe House. Fell hard for Billie....." (The moral of which is obviously to "look before you leap!"). In order to snip our budding romance, or at least to confine it to a "puppy love" stage, I finally informed Billie just before "W" Beach Commando moved to Hove that my #1 girlfriend (see mini-porthole #5 below), to whom I was all but officially engaged, had promised to wait for my return to Canada. The last contact I had with Billie during the war occurred in London the following October, a month prior to my repatriation, when she told me of being engaged to an Ensign in the US Navy and I in turn revealed to her that my previous #1 girlfriend had recently married someone else.

HMS MASTODON, March 1944



Billie being
beach-trained
near
Exbury, Hants



by Skip

by Hart

4. Cecilia Banister Irvine. Sister of Philip Banister, one of the three English boys who left England early in the war to live with the G.W. Birks family in Montreal, Cecilia was working as a Leading "Wren" with the Admiralty in London when we first met in September 1944. I had been unable to attend her wedding the previous December, five months after which her RN Lieutenant husband Nigel Irvine accidentally drowned in Ceylon. While waiting to return to Canada I frequently stayed at the Banister's Stoke Poges home, and so came to know their widowed daughter quite well. Writing to the Birks after one particular weekend visit, I refer to Cecilia as being "very very attractive, much like Philip, blonde hair tho' ". More than once when on leave in London, I accompanied her and her RN father (Captain Gerald C. Banister, Director, Boom Defence Department, Admiralty) for lunch. Then one day in November, after having earlier accepted her personal invitation to escort her to a gala December dinner party and dance, I had to advise her of my forthcoming November repatriation sailing date. As we parted for the final time, we laughingly chanted in unison the closing words of that old-time naval ditty, "All the nice girls love a sailor": "THEN IT'S OFF TO SEA AGAIN, SHIP AHOY, SAILOR BOY".

5. Margaret Janet Muir. I first met Peggie, the only daughter of a long-time friend of Mother's whom we all knew as "Auntie Jen", around 1939 when we were teenagers attending different high schools. Not until after joining the RCNVR two years later, did I screw up enough courage to ask her out to play a game of tennis on the municipal courts near her home. From this beginning and notwithstanding tremendous competition from her scores of boyfriends, I occasionally succeeded in dating her and

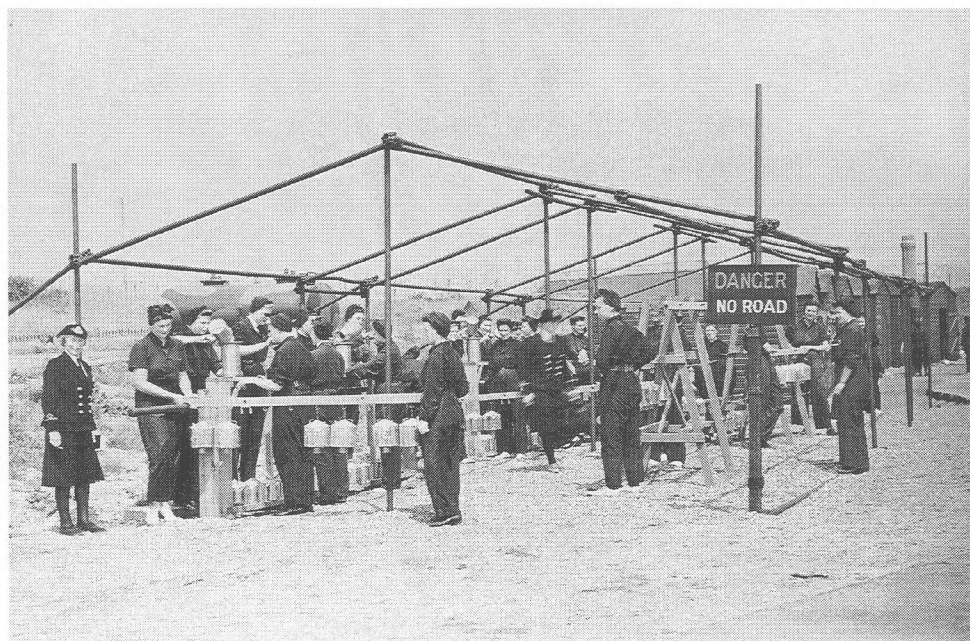


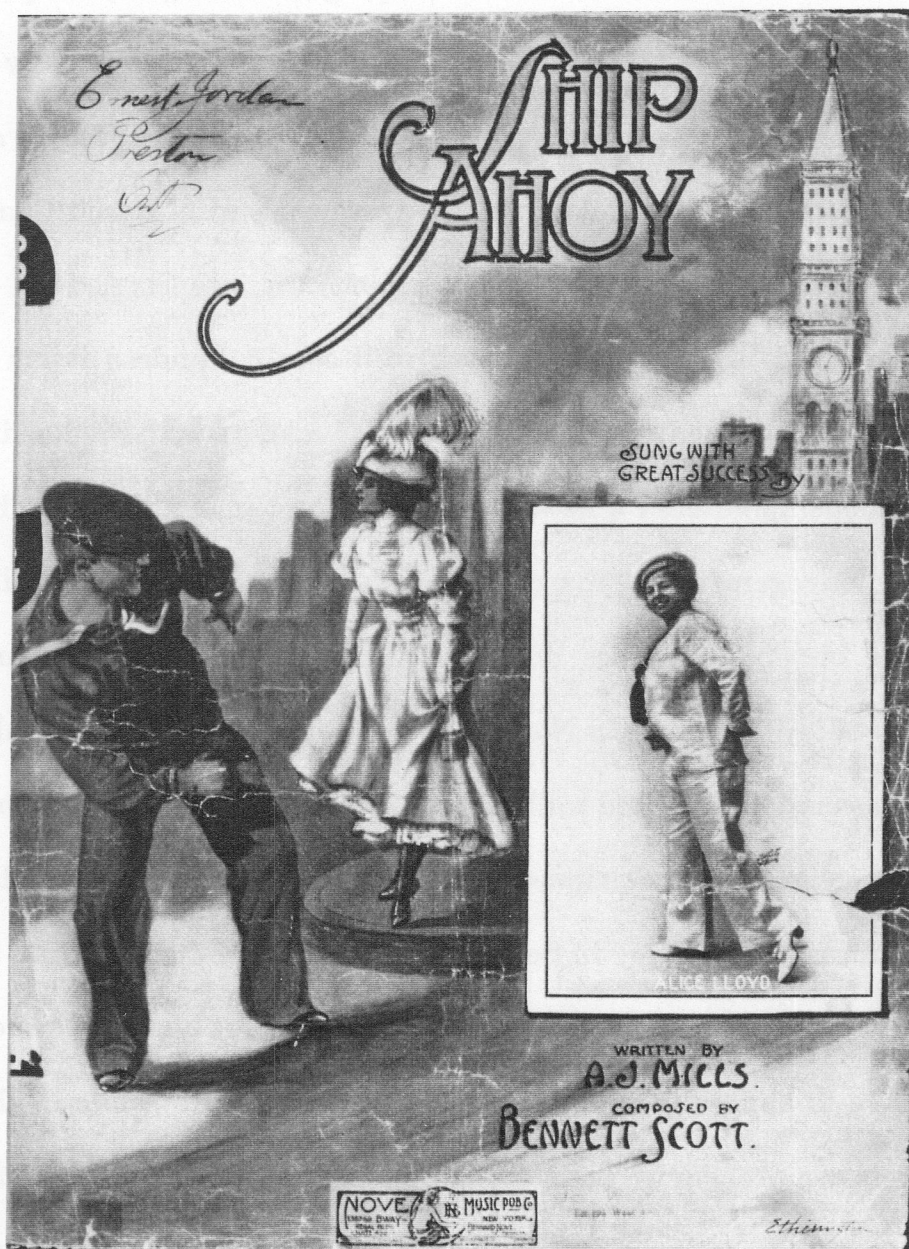
Cecilia Banister, as an RN Wren with the Admiralty's Boom Defence Department in August 1942, is seen here lighting the fuse of a canister to be attached to a hydrogen-filled balloon which would be directed against power-lines on the European mainland.

These two photographs, taken in 1942 and loaned to the author by Cecilia Banister (Irvine) in 1994, show a group of BOOM DEFENCE WRENS, based in Felixstowe, on Confidential Operational Duties involved in preparing and releasing hydrogen-filled balloons against enemy targets on the Continent.

(N.B. Cecilia is standing at the left in one photo and second from the left in the other).

In her March 31, 1994 letter accompanying the photographs, she describes the protective clothing worn when arming and releasing the balloons -- "flash-proof jacket & hood (1/2 mica & 1/2 fine copper guage over the face) + protective cream on hands and fire-proof black gloves."





Written by A.J. Mills
Composed by Bennett Scott
Copyrighted MCMIX in England and America
by the Star Music Publishing Co., Ltd., London
Sung with great success by Alice Lloyd

eventually came to realize that we were developing something beyond purely platonic friendship. Cold or, at best, luke-warm water was poured upon my side of the relationship, however, when she began going "steady" with Freddie Hayes a few months before I went overseas at the end of 1943 to train with RCN Beach Commando "W". Nevertheless, during the entire ensuing ten months, we carried on a perpetual correspondence which altogether numbered well over a hundred items (e.g. letters, cards, cables, flowers, presents, parcels). When she broke-up with Freddie in mid-March 1944, our relationship entered a new phase and almost immediately we began to talk (or write) about engagement and marriage. Within six weeks both our families had been alerted to our budding romance and intentions. Soon afterwards came the first bombshell -- my July wounding in Normandy and reports that I was paralyzed. But as I gradually recovered and started walking again, our August correspondence continued to mention engagement and matrimonial plans. With my return to Canada supposedly imminent, I expressed great joy in September letters to Mother and the family. Then a second or twin bombshell exploded. My repatriation papers had been lost or misplaced, so I would have to appear before yet another medical board. While in the process of undergoing this comprehensive examination and assessment, on Oct. 16th I read in a letter Mother wrote to brother Hartland that Peggie had told her she was going to marry someone else. Four days later, I received the following AIR MAIL letter:

TRAFALGAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS Montreal

MARGARET MUIR, 1936-41.

Cumming House

"I would rather be sick than idle."

Activities: Vice President of Matric. II. Head of Cumming House.
First Basketball Team 1941. Perfect. Gym Lieutenant. Choir.

Favourite Exp.: "I'm waiting for "M".

Pastime: Talking about——

Pet Aversion: Hives.



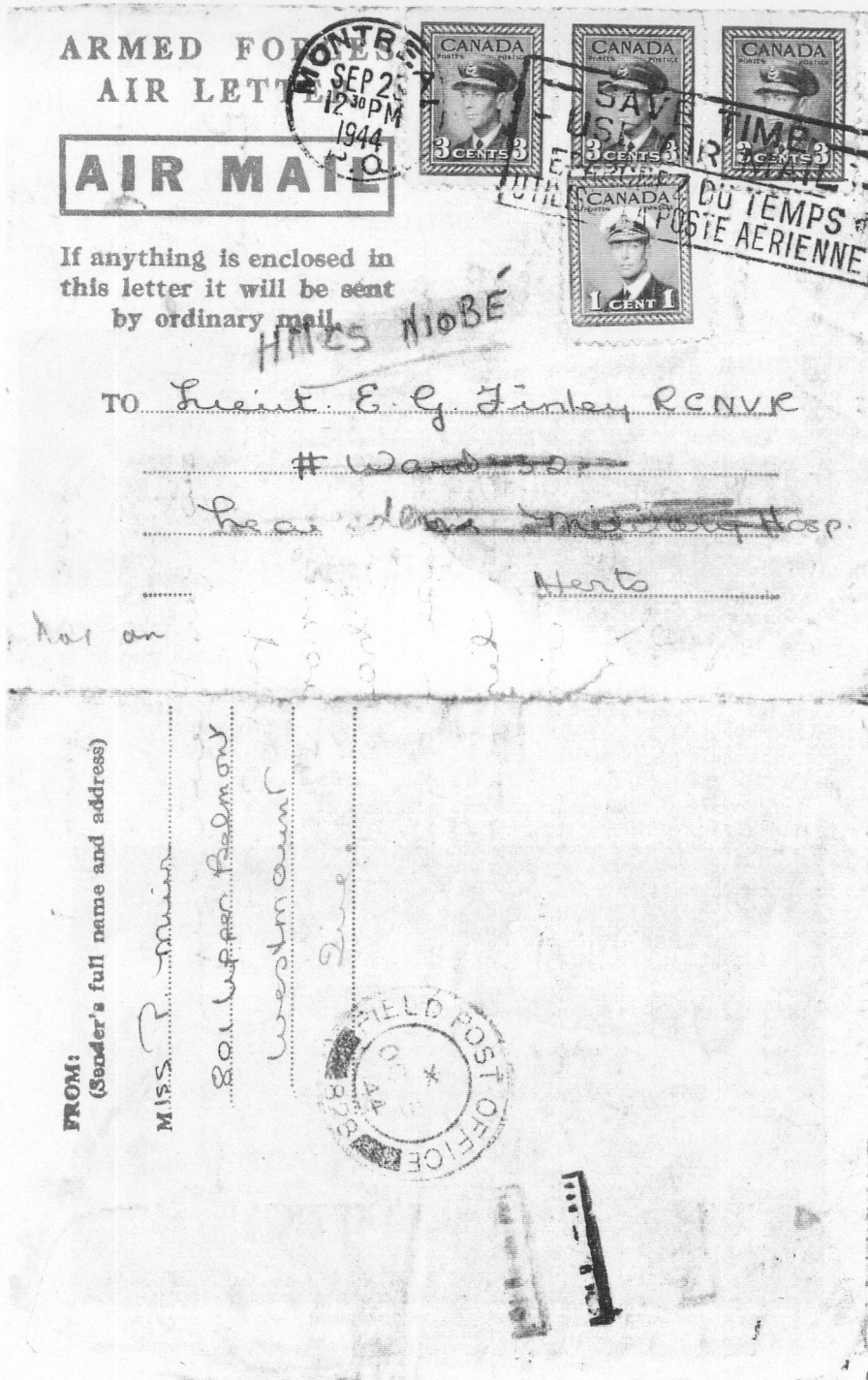
Peggy



FIRST BASKETBALL TEAM 1940-1941

Left to right: Margaret Burden, Peggy Muir, Norah Young, Elaine Ross (captain), Patricia Dunton,
Katharine MacKenzie, Joy Symons.

Extracts from "Trafalgar Echoes"
School Yearbook
June 1941



Post-marked MONTREAL SEP 23, 1944 and addressed to me
at Hertfordshire's Leavesden Military Hospital
from which, four days previously, I had been discharged,
this ARMED FORCES AIR LETTER
was apparently first redirected to HMCS NIOBE
(by FIELD POST OFFICE 828?)
and then forwarded to No.1 N.E.T.D. Thursley, Surrey
where I received it on Oct. 20th

September 23rd 1944.

My dear Skip:-

This is probably the hardest letter I
will ever have to write in my life.
Please don't judge me too harshly.

I am very much in love with a
medical student at McGill and only last
night I accepted his fraternity pin, he is
a Zeta Psi. we are going to get married
very soon.

I know just what you must be
thinking but I just can't help it. I
could go on and not tell you and try and
forget all about Chargo but it would never
work out. Please forgive me.

By the way his name is Charles
Gordon Campbell commonly known as
Chargo. He came from Vancouver. He is
25 years of age and I really do love
him with all my heart.

Please understand this and give us
your blessing. As ~~you~~ and your family's
~~or~~ love is one of my most treasured pos-
sessions.

Yours Truly

Reg

My dear Skip:-

September 23rd 1944

This is probably the hardest letter I will ever have to write in my life. Please don't judge me too harshly..

I am very much in love with a medical student at McGill and only last night I accepted his fraternity pin, he is a Zeta Psi. We are going to get married very soon.

I know just what you must be thinking but I just can't help it. I could go on and not tell you and try and forget all about Chargo but it would never work out. Please forgive me!

By the way his name is Charles Gordon Campbell commonly known as Chargo. He comes from Vancouver. He is 25 years of age and I really love him with all my heart.

Please understand this and give us your blessing as your and your family's love is one of my most treasured possessions.

Yours truly

Peg

Bombshell #3 very nearly wounded me mortally! My immediate recorded reactions were expressed in October 16th letters written respectively to Mother and to the Birks shortly after learning about Peggie's intentions in Mother's letter referred to in the preceding paragraph. To Mother, I wrote:

*..... Now of course I must say something about Peg. I actually read on ahead of H[art]. & saw the news. You'll never know what a shock it was, especially her association with this *married fellow. Her letters had been so sincere & full of love, her desire to become Mrs. E.G. Finley, & all kinds of plans for our future. Then you said at least 1/2 doz people were glad I was out of it - so I came to the same conclusion. Was so glad to have heard all about it, as I might well have been home by now & not known a word. Really, Mum, it makes my future plans so much easier now..... I'll never get married now - but I don't want Muir to think it's because of her, because she would have had to wait a couple of years in any case. I had promised to marry her - I don't say I didn't - but I never said when. I'll have a hard time living this down I'm afraid, but actually my pride is just the same as ever, & I can't thank you enough, Mother dear, for seeing to it months ago*

*Whether Chargo Campbell was divorced or still married when Peggie accepted his fraternity pin was and has remained unknown to me.

that I never actually bought her an engagement ring. Incidentally I will not write her from over here again. Tomorrow I'm off for a medical board so it'll be some time before I leave for Canada. Must close now - dearest love to all & thanks for the news.

To the Birks, I wrote:

Just heard about Peg yesterday in a letter Mother wrote to Hart. Certainly shook me, & I'll never forget the very second I read it. Somehow I can't believe it, but guess it's life. Anon - - -

It seems almost fate when you mentioned to wait before getting married. As I told Mother, I feel much freer now, & keener to start in at McGill.....

Apart from the many implications and personal effects which this latest bombshell had for me, in recent years a most remarkable coincidence has come to light with respect to the whole affair. On September 23rd, the very day Peggie was writing to me, I happened to write to Mother, and it is just conceivable that Peggie and I were both actually putting pen to paper at exactly the same time.

First regarding Peggie's letter. Bearing a circular postal cancellation which includes "MONTREAL PQ SEP 23 1230 PM 1944", it is logical to deduce that, having accepted Chargo's pin at the Zeta Psi fraternity dance held the night before and being emotionally buoyed up by the whole affair, the next morning (Saturday) Peggie most probably got up early, sat right down (possibly even before breakfast), wrote the letter, and then went out immediately to post it in the mailbox scarcely a block from her house. By allowing a lapse of say three hours for the mailtruck picking up her letter to complete its collection route and for subsequent processing at the local postal station, the "1230 PM" part of the postmark infers that the mailbox in question would have been emptied sometime around 8 or 9 AM (Montreal time). Which means that Peggie actually wrote her letter about 7 AM or even earlier. As for my letter, the approximate hour of

writing is revealed in its opening sentence, which reads: "Just a short note before lunch", thus indicating sometime between 12 noon and 1 PM (British time). Now, by making due allowances for Montreal being on "Daylight Saving" and Britain on "Double British Summer" time in September 1944, there is certainly the possibility that Peggie and I were both in the very act of writing our September 23rd letters at virtually the same time or at least between the same hours, namely, 1000 and 1100 GMT. Indeed, quite a coincidence!

So much for the time coincidence of the two letters. With respect to their relative contents, however, they are entirely antithetical. While Peggie's letter to me (see above) simply announced her imminent betrothal to someone else, in my Sept. 23rd letter to Mother I expressed my feelings towards her as follows:

Have been doing some serious thinking lately as regards the future.....My big problem tho' is as regards the young lady. She certainly seems keen to get married, but with my future so darn obscure, I can't see that we'd be anything but a load on many people. What d'ya think, Mama? As long as we are together for a few months all these problems can be ironed out I feel, so I'm not worrying about the marriage angle, other than the fact that we've both certainly committed ourselves pretty outspokenly (or should I say "out-writtenly"). God only knows I'm crazy about her.....

Reverting once again to the main stream of this present PORTHOLE, we find that my repatriation process began to speed up at the beginning of November. First came word from CNMO in London that my trans-Atlantic passage back to Canada was no longer restricted to hospital ships only. Accordingly, on Nov.17, I found myself among a large contingent of Canadian service personnel who left #1 N.E.T.D. ("Tweedsmuir Camp" in Thursley, Surrey) and headed for Liverpool to board HMT Ile de France for Convoy TA-163's six-day voyage to Halifax. Alas, it was "back to sea again, ship ahoy,

sailor boy" and homeward bound.

Upon arrival in Halifax on Nov.23, a Montreal Daily Star reporter cornered about a dozen of us returning veterans whose homes were in Montreal, took our picture, and filed his story which, appearing in next day's edition, announced that we would be arriving in Montreal that evening at 7:30 p.m.. As it turned out, all those in the group (except me) did in fact detrain in Montreal at the indicated time. My family, having read the story and seen my face in the accompanying picture, had apparently gathered in haste to greet me at the train station. However, unbeknown to my family, the medical authorities in HMCS Stadacona had apparently decided at the last moment to detain me in Halifax for further examination. Consequently, with me being a "no show" at Montreal's Windsor Station, the Finley Family's welcoming committee disappointedly dispersed.

Between Nov.23 and Dec.5 I underwent intensive and extensive examination, as a result of which the following notes and comments were added to my medical record:

-- SKULL: Stereoscopic A.P., single frontal and stereoscopic right lateral projections of the skull.

These films show a metallic foreign body lying within the skull. On the lateral film, this is localized 11 cm. behind the inner wall of the frontalbone and 4 cm. above the external auditory meatus.

There has been a craniotomy done with an opening of the skull about 4 x 5 cm. in size. In the A.P. projection the foreign body is approximately 2.5 cm. to the right of the midline.

(T.M. McLennan, Surg.Lt.Cmdr., Radiologist)

-- Cranial Nerves:

I : Intact

II : V.A... Rt. eye slight defect in left visual field.

III, IV, VI : Bilateral horizontal coarse nystagmus, more on gaze to right, rapid component to right.

V : Left hemianaesthesia to light touch and pin prick. Moderate weakness of left temporal and massetic muscles. Left corneal reflex absent.

VII : A very slight lower facial asymmetry, on emotional movements.

VIII : Intact.

IX & X : Absent sensation on left side of palate. Absent left pharyngeal and palate reflexes.

XI : Weak left sternomastoid and trapezius muscles.

XII : Tongue deviates to left.

Reflexes: left corneal absent. Left palatal absent.

Biceps	2	3
Triceps	2	3
Radials	2	3
Abdominals	2	1
Crenastirics	2	1
Knee Jerk	2	3-4
Ankle Jerk	2	2-3
Plantar	No clonus	Equivocal

Sensory System: Complete left hemianaesthesia to light touch, pin prick, temperature. Loss of sense of position in left finger, toe and foot. Two-point discrimination lost.

Motor: Left hemiparesis - recovering. Finer movements of left hand and foot lost.

Co-ordination: Moderately good, but on left side show alternate movements with some dysdiadochocinesia and clumsily performed heel-knee-tibia test. Finger-nose-finger moderately good.

Diagnosis: Traumatic (Gun shot wound) lesion of right internal capsule involving motor, complete sensory and minimal involvement of optic radiation.

Category "E" recommended.

(sgd) R. B. McKenzie Surg. Lt. V.R.
for Medical Consultant.

Utilizing all this information from Case Sheet (Specialist Report) documents as well as medical records amassed since the previous July 23rd, a Medical Board of Survey (my fourth) met on November 27 and 28 in HMCS Scotian, Halifax, to recommend my future disposition. The Report of the Board (with Surg.Lt.Cdr. C. Stoddard as President and Surg.Lts. R.B. McKenzie and Dingwall as Members) contains the following relevant points under the indicated Sections:

7. Present Diseases or Injuries: G.S.W. right temporal region with left hemiparesis and hemianaesthesia.

8. Present Condition:

(a) Subjective (in individual's own words) 'I feel a tendency to limp because I can't coordinate my muscles. My left side gets cold and my sense of feeling on this side is poor. There seems to be a continual throbbing in my head which is not like the ordinary headache, in that it is present all the time. I cannot open my mouth fully.'

(b) History of Present Disability.....At present he still notes hemianaesthesia and hemiparesis of left side, is unable to open his mouth wide and has persistent throbbing frontal headaches, persistent 24 hours a day.

10. Physical Examination:

Neurological: See Specialist's report

Reports attached: X-ray chest

X-ray skull

Neurological consultant

11. Were diseases or injuries caused or aggravated:

(a) By intemperance or improper conduct No

(b) By unreasonable refusal to accept treatment No

12. What is the prognosis and probable duration of disability Indefinite

13. Give nature and probable duration of treatment required That he be referred to Montreal Neurological Institute under D.V.A. for further treatment of indefinite duration.

14. Can the former civilian occupation be resumed:
(a) On discharge No -- existing hemiparesis
(b) Following further treatment Possibly
15. Recommendations That he be brought before the Medical Board for recategorization.
16. Does the Board concur with the preceding report?
We concur.
17. Recommendations of Medical Board:
(a) Medical category "E" (b)
Treatment required Further observation and treatment under D.V.A.
18. Approved by: ...for (D.W. Johnstone), Surg.Capt., RCNVR,
Command Medical Officer, C.N.A.
- Confirmed by: G.A. Gould, Surg.Lt.Cmdr., RCNVR, for
Medical Director General, RCN, Dec.11, 1944.

TO BE COMPLETED BY D.P. & N.H.

19. This Board was referred to D.P. & N.H. at Halifax, N.S. on Dec.4, 1944.

Remarks of P.M.E. Being transferred to Montreal.
Exam. will be completed there.
[signed by] Pension Medical Examiner.

Remarks of C.M.O. Transfer to Montreal Neurological.
[signed by] Chief Medical Officer.

This case is now cleared by D.P. & N.H. Any further action as may be directed above by P.M.E. or C.N.O. will be implemented after discharge from Naval Service, and the dischargée has been so instructed.

Date 4.12.44 [signed by] District Administrator



Surg. Capt. David L. Johnstone, RCNVR
Senior Medical Officer (East Coast)
(Brother of A/Lt. Cdr. Richard J. Johnstone, RCNVR,
former Commanding Officer & D/PBM, RCN Beach Commando "W")

So now, for further treatment and final assessment, it was inland to my home port of Montreal from where I had departed just twelve months previously to serve overseas in Combined Operations as an Assistant Beachmaster with RCN Beach Commando "W". Arriving in Montreal on Dec.6, I was admitted a week later to the Royal Victoria Hospital (Ross Pavilion, 5th floor) where I underwent yet another complete physical examination. The following comprise selected comments which appear on the CASE HISTORY SHEET's six-page medical report:

23.12.44 A. Final Diagnosis A metallic foreign body in the right hemisphere, probably in the posterior lid of the capsule

14.12.44 B. COMPLAINTS:

1. Headaches - since July 1944
2. Weakness of the left side of the body - since July 1944
3. Impairment of vision of the right eye - since July 1944

C. PRESENT ILLNESS:

The pt. was well until July 23rd, 1944. While serving in France at that time he was struck by shrapnel in the right temple. He remembers events fairly clearly, but does not actually recall being hit. He continued to drive his jeep a little farther, and then scrambled out in order to find cover. He fell down as his legs would not carry him. He crawled to cover, using his right knee and right arm. He remembers being looked at, and then, apparently, he lost consciousness. The above story is as clear a picture as can be obtained, as the patient changes minor details each time he tells it. He can recall only 2-3 isolated incidents in the next 10 days.

On August 2nd, 1944, he woke up at Basingstoke Hospital. He had a terrible headache. He says that he had been operated upon in France, and all but one piece of shrapnel had been removed from his head. His headaches have persisted since. They are worse in the mornings. He describes them as a generalized dull ache, which becomes worse when he bends over or when he lies down; no association with nausea or vomiting.

The patient's next complaint is weakness and a "funny feeling" in the whole left side of his body. He first noticed it about five minutes after he was hit when his knees gave out from under him. The weakness of the left arm and leg has gradually been disappearing. He was allowed out of bed on August 18th, 1944; and he states that since that time his walking has gradually improved, and at the present time he does not limp. The lack of sensation has, however, persisted. He says that there are times when he doesn't seem to know exactly where his left leg or arm are. He used to be left-handed in most things - now he uses his right hand. The left leg seems to get cold more rapidly than does the right one.

The patient states that since his accident the vision in the right eye has been less than that in the left. He also states that he is unable to open his mouth as widely as previously.

D. SYSTEMIC INQUIRY:

Extremities: Weakness and tingling in extremities, as described in H.P.I. The patient was in bed from July 23rd until August 18th, 1944.

E. PHYSICAL EXAMINATION:

Extremities: To be described under Neuromuscular examination. However, the left foot appears to be colder than the right.

F. NEUROLOGICAL EXAMINATION:

Mental: The patient is a bright, friendly, cooperative young man. His story varies a little in the telling of minor details, particularly as to the events immediately preceding and following his injury.

Cranial Nerves:

1. Olfactory is normal.
2. Optic - fundi appear clear. Pupils are round, the right being a little larger than the left. Both react briskly to light and accommodation. No nystagmus.
- 3.4.6 No muscle imbalance.
5. Slight decrease in pain over all branches of left side. Motor power is normal.
- 7.8.9.10. All normal.
11. Slight weakness of left trapezius muscle.
12. No tongue deviation.

Motor System:

Tone: No gross abnormality. Power: Some weakness of the left arm and left leg in all muscles. However, he is able to balance on either leg.

Co-ordination:

Impairment of whole left side of body to light touch and pain. Two-point test faulty on the left side. Vibration, heat and cold all normal.

Deep Reflexes:

Right Left

Biceps	x	x
Triceps	x	x
Supinator	x	x
K.J.	x	xx
A.J.	x	xx
No clonus		

Superficial Reflexes:

Babinski: negative bilaterally.

Abdominals: x,x.

Autonomic: Left foot slightly colder than the right. Both dorsalis pedis arteries are palpable.

SUMMARY OF POSITIVE FINDINGS:

Subjective:

1. Shrapnel injury, right temple, in July 1944.
2. Period of unconsciousness - up to 10 days.
3. Awoke with severe headache and weakness of left side of body - these complaints have persisted to date.

Objective:

1. Some weakness of left side of body.
2. Impairment of sensation - touch and pain - over whole left side of body.

IMPRESSION:

1. Scar tissue over right motor and sensory areas of cortex.
2. Foreign body in right side of intracranial cavity.
3. Hematoma, localized over rt. pre and post-Rolandic areas.

DR. M.K. YOUNG.

Dec.15/44

SPECIAL EXAMINATION:

He was left handed.

Shrapnel wound. Rt. temporal region.

Fundi O.K. fields O.K. to rough test. Pupils equal and active.

E.O.M. O.K.

Cranial nerves O.K. perhaps some very slight flatness left nose labial fold - cannot open jaws fully on account of contracture of right temporal muscles.

N.S. He walks normally when careful. Can snap fingers of left hand. No paralysis, no in-coordination in F.N. or K.H.T. test with eye closed.

S.S. Loss to pinprick over entire left side of body, face and limbs. Loss of sense of position to passive movements of toes.

Reflexes: Tendon jerks left side relatively more active. Left plantar extension.

Left abdominal relatively diminished.

Recognises objects in left hand fairly well; partial astereognosis however in recognising coins. Impaired two-point sensibility.

COLIN RUSSEL, M.D.

Dec.18/44

X/RAY REPORT:

SKULL: P.A. stereo A.P. and stereo right lateral views have been made. There is a defect in the right temporal region measuring about 3.5 x 4.5 cm. in diameter. A metallic foreign body 2 cm. in length by about 8 mm. in diameter is present deep in the right cerebral hemisphere with its inner pole approximately 2.3 cm. from the mid-line. This lies with its central portion on a plane 4 cm. above the sella turcica and about 2 cm. behind the posterior clinoids. Presumably it is just lateral [to] the optic thalamus. No other foreign bodies are visible and there is no suggestion of any depressed bone. No intracranial calcification is shown and there is no deformity of the sella turcica. The sinuses are not grossly abnormal and there is nothing remarkable about the mastoids.

IMPRESSION: There is one moderately large metallic foreign body lying deeply in the right cerebral hemisphere. A subtemporal decompression is present on the right side.

A.E. CHILDE, M.D.

Dec.22/44

I have reviewed the history and findings with Dr. Russel and can add nothing. The visual fields are full on rough testing. The optic discs are flat and cups are preserved and yet vessels are tortuous and veins are full.

He does have headaches with changes of position and lying with head low. The subtemporal decompression becomes excavated when he sits up and out flush when he lies horizontally.

I agree that with his present condition as satisfactory as it is he should not have an encephalogram, but before he is advised to go south an electrogram should be done and if spikes are present it would be well to put him on phenobarbital and even dilantin.

Before final decision is made as to disability I suppose visualization of ventricles should be done.

He is left handed - almost ambidextrous. No speech disturbance.

No bruit on auscultation of head.

W.V. CONE, M.D.

Dec.22/44

E.E.G. REPORT:

ABNORMALITY: There were random delta waves recorded continuously throughout the examination. There were no large amplitude discharges of any form and hyperventilation failed to bring out any definite epileptiform activity.

BACKGROUND: The background alpha rhythm was fairly normal, except on the right side when it was intermingled with some slow wave activity.

LOCALIZATION: The slow wave activity was from the right hemisphere almost entirely except with monopolar leads where the slow waves occurred occasionally from the left side also. It was not localized definitely in the right hemisphere, but extended over rather a large area from the temporal to the parieto-occipital region. Some phase reversals occurred over the temporal region.

IMPRESSION: The electrogram indicates a deep-seated lesion of the right hemisphere, causing continuous delta waves, signifying unresolved damage, but insofar as the present record is concerned, there is no evidence for an epileptogenic lesion at the present time.

H.H. JASPER, M.D.

Dec.23/44

URINE: Clear, dk. amber, 1027 acid; alb neg: sug 0, negative microscopic.

Dec.23/44

Stereoscopic x-rays head show metal foreign body in right hemisphere probably in posterior limb of capsula, which fully accounts for all findings - optic radiation not involved. My reaction is that there is no present indication for further examination such as pneumo-encephalogram. He should continue exercises with practicing use of left hand. He should pay particular attention to avoid getting any part of left side frozen as he has loss to heat and cold on that side as well. He has an opportunity to go south this winter and this would be an excellent thing and should be sympathetically considered.

COLIN RUSSEL, M.D.

COURSE IN THE HOSPITAL:

Uneventful.

MEDICATION ON DISCHARGE:

None.

Dec.23/44

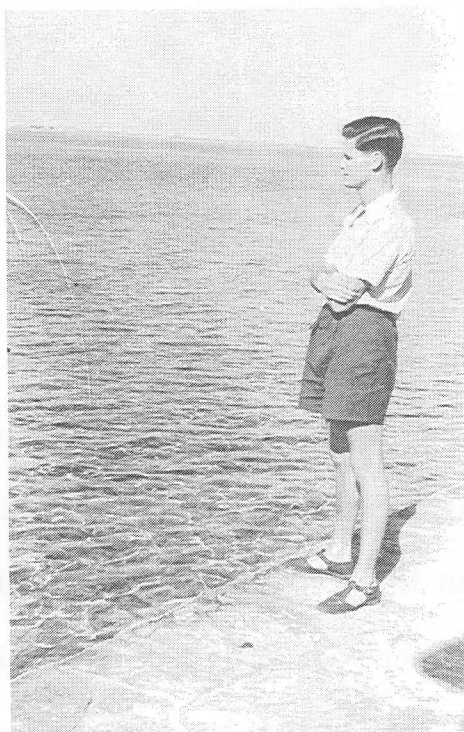
Patient discharged from the hospital to-day.

Condition on Discharge	<u>Unchanged</u>
Disposal of Case	<u>To Unit</u>
Date <u>December 23/44</u>	<u>LIONEL L. PLOUFFE, M.D.</u> Medical Officer i/c Case

Such then are some of the principal remarks appearing on my Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) records. With respect to Dr. Cone's Dec.22 statement regarding my overall present condition (see p.84), it is surprising to find the word "satisfactory" replaced by "unsatisfactory" on the Montreal Neurological Institute (MNI)'s CASE HISTORY SHEET which dealt with exactly the same topic. Apart from this "slip up", the comments contained in the respective RVH and MNI assessments are quite similar, as the latter, prepared by Dr.M.K.Young (Neurological Interne) and dated 1-2-45, appears to be a summary of the former. The final note on the MNI CASE HISTORY SHEET indicates that the whole exercise has been carried out at the request of the Federal Government's Department of Pensions and National Health.

Thus, for the time being, was I finished with hospitals, tests, and treatment. After spending Christmas quietly at home and being discharged, medically unfit, from the RCNVR on Feb.14, 1945, I hitched a ride in the unheated bomb-bay of an RCAF aircraft to Nassau where, harbouring at the Birks' "Coastguard" bungalow, I spent the ensuing eight weeks undergoing the healthy and happy transition from Beach Commando to Beach Comber. How vividly do I recall my return flight to Montreal via Chicago. It was

SKIP



from
Beach Commando in Normandy
July 1944
to
Beach Comber in Nassau
February 1945

the 12th of April, and O'Hare airport was as silent as a cemetery, stunned by the news of President Roosevelt's death. As the US Ninth Army was crossing the Elbe in Europe, in the United States Vice President Harry S. Truman was humbly declaring: "Fellow Americans: I feel like a bale of hay has just fallen on my head. I ask you to pray for me, and I mean it".

Shortly after my arrival back in Montreal, the Department of Veterans Affairs informed me that I would receive a 15% disability pension. A few years later, after an examination confirmed that deterioration in my left eye had resulted directly from the gun shot wound, the pension was increased to 20%. Then in 1965, when the sensory dysfunction on my left side proved to have worsened and an inability to sing in tune or even distinguish between musical notes was found to prevail, a full reassessment of my overall condition resulted in the pensionable disability being changed to 40%. In recommending a doubling of the percentage, the three medical advisers who examined me felt that my pathological condition had been "underassessed for some time".

As the years passed, I came to realize that while my "port-side" hand, arm, and leg powers were becoming somewhat better, I continued to experience considerable difficulty with respect to my left foot. This condition resulted directly from the fact that I had very little feeling in the whole left side of my body. By far the greatest inconvenience, as a consequence, was my inability to maintain my balance in turning to the right when dancing, skating, skiing, etc.. An oversimplified way of describing what the shrapnel did is to say that it bruised my motor muscles and shattered my sensory network: and while the muscles subsequently regained full power, the network

Wife-to-be

TRAFALGAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
Montreal



RAE HUNTER, "Hunt", 1939-43.

Ross House

*"A carefree, laughing girl, a sport, a friend,
In short, a girl on whom we all depend."*

Activities: Head Prefect, President of Form VIIa, Sub-Editor of the
Mag, Head of Ross House, First Basketball Team, Gym Lieutenant,
Choir.

Pastime: Falling for Margie's stories.

Pet Aversion: Listening to Hall's singing.

Probable Destination: Orange blossoms and Lohengrin.



Extracts from "Trafalgar Echoes"
School Yearbook
June 1943

has never recovered. Obviously, and particularly during the first few years, many major adjustments had to be made especially regarding physical activities. Indeed my whole life-style, which heretofore had centered around sports and the outdoors, became transformed into more of a literary venture -- ideas, books, reading, teaching, and the like. And simply because the first twenty years of my life as well as my basic temperament certainly did not particularly prepare me for such a major change, the whole business has constituted a life-long challenge.

Graduation from McGill University in 1948 and marriage in 1949 were followed by Master and Doctoral degrees from Columbia University in New York, all being greatly facilitated by financial assistance granted to Canadian war veterans and pensioners. By 1960 our family consisted of three daughters and a son, and my career in teaching had reached its mid-point.

One day while browsing through my maternal grandfather's extensive personal papers (he had died in 1946), I happened upon a war-time exchange of correspondence between him and the Honourable Angus L. Macdonald, Minister of National Defence for Naval Services. The contents of the two letters fairly struck me between the eyes as from an exploding bombshell! The question as to why my next of kin was never notified about my July 23, 1944 injury was herein answered! And to think that I had no previous knowledge of either the reason or the correspondence. Unfortunately I have never again seen these letters; and the copies I made of them, which my wife recalls reading, have been misplaced or lost. Meanwhile, all attempts to date to find either of the letters in the National Archives of Canada and in the Macdonald Collection held in

POSTWAR COMBINED OPERATIONS



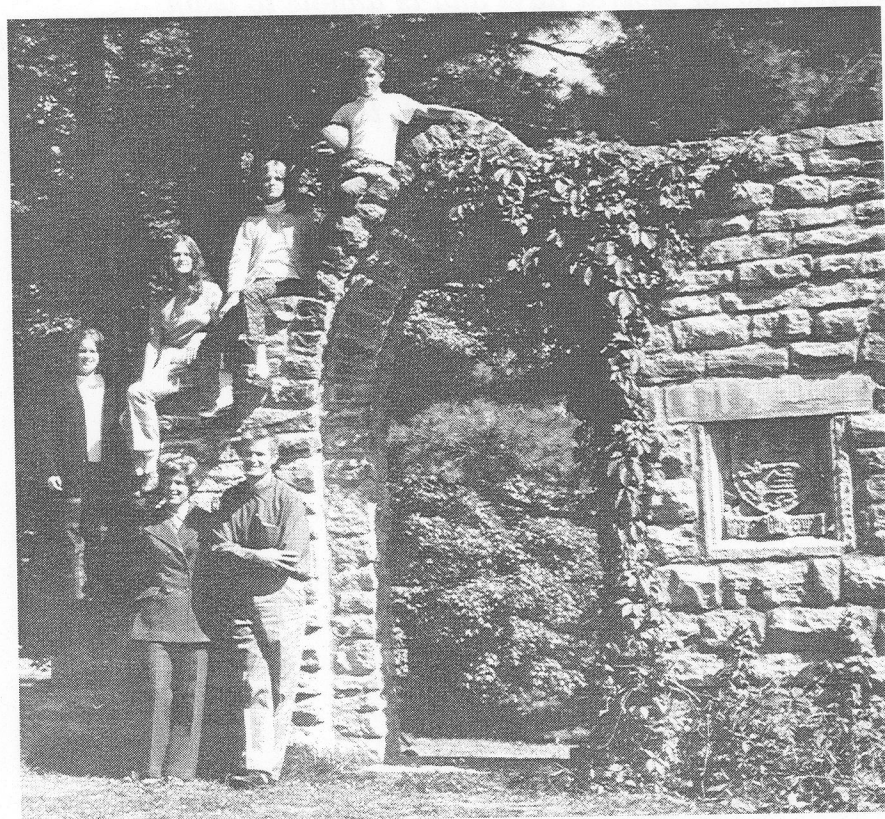
Catherine Rae Hunter becomes Mrs. E.G.Finley
June 25th, 1949



Mother and Crew
L/R: Linda, Diana, Barbara, Gerald
Montreal West, 1960



Growing old: Mother & Father
 Growing up (L/R): Barbi, Linda, Dani, Ger
 Senneville, P.Q., 1967



Mackenzie King estate
 Kingsmere, P.Q., 1969

the Nova Scotia Provincial Archives have proved unsuccessful. The following reconstruction of the two letters' respective contents will, therefore, have to bear the above caveats in mind.

*The Hon. Angus L. Macdonald,
Minister of National Defence
for Naval Services
Ottawa, Ont.*

*Apt. B. 101,
Gleneagles Apartments,
3940 Cote des Neiges Rd.,
Montreal, P. Que.*

Dear Mr. Minister:

**August 10, 1944*

I am writing on behalf of my daughter, Mrs. M. Ross Finley, whose son, Lieutenant Eric Gault Finley, RCNVR, was apparently seriously wounded on July 23rd while serving with RCN Beach Commando "W" in Normandy. I wonder whether, as next of kin, Mrs. Finley can expect to receive official notification from your Ministry about her son's injury.

Realizing you must be constantly faced with balancing regulations against individual cases, may I nevertheless mention that just recently we have learned from a reliable source that as a result of the injury Lt. Finley was unconscious for several days and is unable to walk.

Having no intention, however, of prolonging the matter, we beseech you to ensure that, in the future and in so far as circumstances permit, all regulations are followed with respect to notifying next of kin about Canadian service personnel casualties.

*I remain, yours sincerely,
John W. Ross*

**This is an estimated date, as is August 20 in the following letter.*

Mr. John W. Ross,
Gleneagles Apartments,
Apt. B. 101,
Montreal, P.Que.

National Defence Headquarters,
Ottawa, Ont.

*August 20, 1944

Dear Mr. Ross:

In reply to your letter of August 10, 1944 concerning the injury sustained on July 23rd by Lieutenant Eric Gault Finley, RCNVR, I am pleased to advise you that it was not considered necessary to inform Mrs. M. Ross Finley, his mother and next of kin, of the injury.

As you may very well appreciate, Mr. Ross, it would take an inordinate amount of time as well as of human resources to notify next of kin whenever any member of our Armed Forces sustained an injury. Consequently our policy calls for notification to be sent at an appropriate time only when an injury results in death or is officially assessed as serious or life-threatening, and in Lieutenant Finley's case, none of these conditions was judged to pertain.

Respectfully yours,

*Angus L. Macdonald,
Minister of National Defence for Naval Services*

In the first place, does the Minister's reply not overlook Section 4 of Naval Order 3741 (see pp.41-42) which came into effect on June 24, 1944? Secondly, does the reply not say, in so many words, that Finley's injury was simply

NOT SERIOUS ENOUGH?

*This is an estimated date, as is August 10 in the previous letter.



EXCLUSIVE CONNECTION WITH WESTERN UNION CABLE SERVICE

CANADIAN NATIONAL



W M ARMSTRONG GENERAL MANAGER
TORONTO

TELEGRAPHS

945 MAY 6 PM 10 51

(50)

RXGA75 41 2 EXTRA GB=RCAF OTTAWA ONT 6 1012P

*Found 840A.
JA.*

E B FINLEY, REPORT DELIVERY=

2979

320 COTE ST ANTOINE RD MTL=

M9864 PLEASD TO ADVISE THAT YOUR SON FLIGHT LIEUTENANT
HARTLAND ROSS FINLEY J ONE FOUR NOUGHT THREE NOUGHT HAS
RETURNED TO HIS UNIT AFTER HAVING BEEN OVERDUE AT HIS BASE
AFTER AIR OPERATIONS OVERSEAS MAY SECOND STOP LETTER FOLLOWS=
RCAF CASUALTIES OFFICER.

120406

macl

FORM 8122

WELCOME NEWS about brother Hart

ADDRESS REPLY TO:
THE SECRETARY,
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE FOR AIR,
OTTAWA, ONTARIO.



OUR FILE J14030 (R.O.4)
REF. YOUR
DATED

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

OTTAWA, Canada, 7th May, 1945.

Mr. E.B. Finley,
320 Cote St. Antoine Rd.,
Montreal, Quebec.

Dear Mr. Finley:

Confirming my telegram of recent date, advice has been received from the Royal Canadian Air Force Casualties Officer, Overseas, that your son, Flight Lieutenant Hartland Ross Finley, arrived safely at his unit after having been overdue at his base from air operations Overseas on May 2nd, 1945.

The original report stated that your son was the sole occupant of an aircraft which took off to carry out a fighter sweep on May 2nd, 1945. His aircraft was hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire and was seen to crash in the area of Segeberg, Germany, at 4:00 P.M. A subsequent report states that your son arrived safely at his unit having escaped by parachute.

I join with you and the members of your family in your joy in your son's safety.

Yours sincerely,

J. L. Westman

R.C.A.F. Casualty Officer,
for Chief of the Air Staff.

P.S.

A few hours prior to the cessation of all fighting in Europe at midnight, May 8th-9th, 1945, ("VE-DAY"), Mother received word in a CN telegram from the Department of National Defence that Hartland, having been overdue after May 2nd air operations, had since returned to his unit. Fortunately, however, if the news caused her to shed any tears, they weren't of sadness because only two days previously her cousin Arnold Heeney -- Prime Minister Mackenzie King's Principal Secretary -- had telephoned from Ottawa to advise her that Hartland was safe and sound with his Spitfire squadron at Saltau in Germany. Apparently, in the process of shooting down a German JU-88 on May 2nd near Hamburg, his own plane burst suddenly into flames and he had to bail out. After avoiding capture for forty-eight hours, he "surrendered" to a British Sherman tank crew at a road intersection and was subsequently transported by an Allied staff car back to the Saltau station. After supper in the mess hall, he was introduced to Air Vice Marshal Frank McGill, RCAF, who just happened to be visiting the Canadian air base. On learning that Hartland was a son of his friend Eric Finley, the AVM assured him that upon his return to Ottawa later in the week, he'd get word to Hart's next of kin. So it was that McGill duly alerted Heeney who in turn contacted Mother.

Hartland's May 2nd, 1945 flight, which ended his second tour of operations, gave him the "distinction" of having bailed out safely on both his very first and also his very last operational missions of the War. On August 12th, 1943, en route back to the UK from a sweep over the Pas de Calais region, his Spitfire ran out of fuel. Having emitted a "M'aider" (also written "MayDay") radio signal, he bailed out and minutes afterwards found himself Skipper of a rubber dinghy in the English Channel. Nauseated, completely chilled and soaked to the bones, he was eventually picked up three hours later by an Air-Sea rescue launch just as darkness closed down. His only regret (as he reminiscently recalls) was, because of the nausea, having to turn down the tot of hot rum which his rescuers proffered him. His subsequent rewards comprised membership in the "Goldfish" Club and a brooch from the GQ Company, manufacturers of the parachute utilized on the occasion.

P.P.S.

Now had it not been for Japan's unexpectedly sudden capitulation four months afterwards, marking the end of World War II, who knows but that Mother would have been subjected to yet another "next of kin" experience. For in the summer of 1945, my younger brother Alan, a lieutenant in the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment of Canada), was standing by to proceed overseas -- East or West -- as the latest member of the Fighting Finleys. Fortunately, by never having to engage in actual combat, he thereby spared Mother any further anxiety regarding the well being of her three sons.

LES FRÈRES FINLEY



(de la gauche au droit): Skip, Alan, Hart
waiting for their dates to exit the powder-room
St. Andrew's Ball
Windsor Hotel
Montreal
1945

Note Hart's DFC ribbon, Operation Tour Wing & bar, and wound stripe.

MEDICAL RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS, 1944

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Normandy</u>
1.	<u>July 23</u>	1200	#10 Cdn. Field Ambulance. Field Medical Card.
2.			Add'l Notes by Unit M.O. and Field Ambulance.
3.		1320	#3 Cdn. Casualty Clearing Station. Admitted.
4.		1430	#3 Cdn. CCS. Admitted to Resus.
5.		1820	#6 MNSU (75th Brit. Gen. Hospital). Admitted.
6.		2000	#6 Mobile Neuro-Surgical Unit. Operation.
7.			#6 MNSU. Operation Card for Head Injuries.
8.			#6 MNSU. Interchange of Medical Information. Follow-up Card.
9.	24-5		#6 MNSU. Penicillin [Schedule & Doses].
10.	25		Air Evacuation Label. Section C.
11.	25		[Patient Status] -- LYING/SEVERE
12.	25		Ship Label. Diagnosis (briefly) - SEVERE

England

13.	26	0030	Basingstoke Neurological & Plastic Surgery Hospital. Notification of Admission.
14a.		0300	BNPS. Request culture from head wound swab.
14b.	27		BNPS. Laboratory Report on swab culture.
15.	26-7		BNPS. Skull X-ray Request & Report.
16.	27 to <u>Aug. 2</u>		BNPS. Daily urine specimen Laboratory Reports.
17.	<u>Aug. 1-2</u>		BNPS. Skull X-ray Request & Report.
18.	4		BNPS. Provisional PULHEMS Grading.
19.	14-15		BNPS. Hospital or Sick List Record. (2pp.)
20.	15		BNPS. Hospital Discharge Notification.
21.	15	1200	#23 Canadian General Hospital (Leavesden). Notification of Admission.
22.	28-31		#23 CGH. Medical History of an Invalid. (4pp.)
23.	<u>Sept. 15</u>		#23 CGH. Treatment Charts.
24.	18		#23 CGH. Hospital or Sick List Record. (2pp.)
25.	18		#23 CGH. Medical History Sheet for Men in Naval Service of Canada.
26.	18		#23 CGH. Hospital Discharge Notification.
27.	<u>Oct. 19/26</u>		BNPS. Medical History of an Invalid. (4pp.)

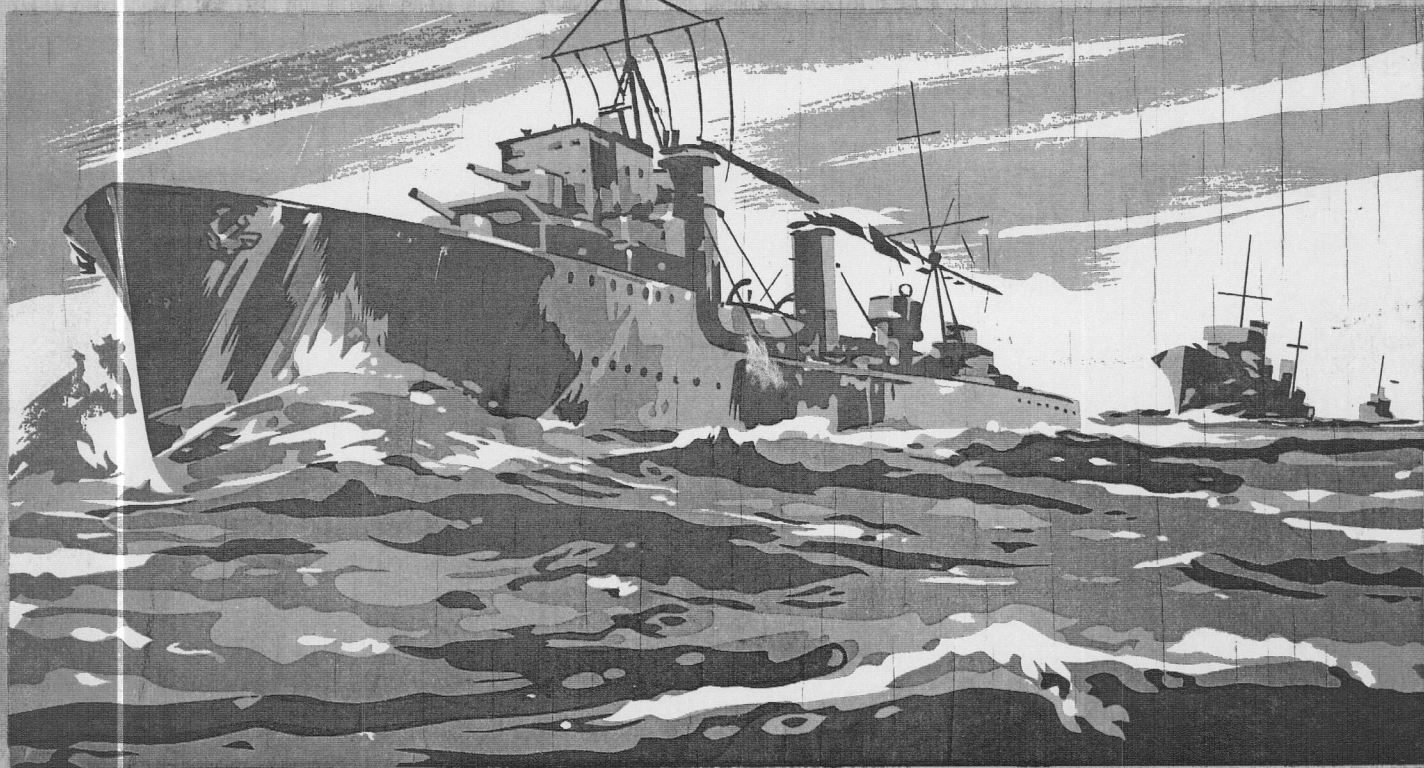
Canada

28.	<u>Nov. 23</u>		HMCS Scotian (Halifax). X-ray. HMCS Scotian. Inspection of Chests (DND)
29.	23		Case Sheet (Specialist Report) -- Eyes.
30.	23		Case Sheet (Specialist Report) -- Skull.
31.	23		Case Sheet (Specialist Report) -- Chief Medical Consultant (2pp.)
32.	23		Mazzini Slide blood test.
33.	<u>27-Dec. 12</u>		Report of a Medical Board of Survey. (4pp.)
34.	<u>Dec. 14-23</u>		Montreal Neurological Institute & Royal Victoria Hospital. Case History. (8pp.)

MEDICAL TERMS

A.J. (ankle jerk)
Albustit staphylococcus (see Staphylococcus)
Amnesia (Loss of Memory)
Astereognosis (Inability to Identify Common Objects by Touch)
A.T. (Anti-Tetanus)
Auricle (Ear Lobe)
Auscultation (Act of Listening)
Clonus (Spasm)
Cremasterics (Spermatic Cord Muscles)
CSF (Cerebrospinal Fluid)
Debridement (Cleaning)
Diathermy (Heating of Body Tissue)
Dura (Outer Brain & Spinal Cord Membrane)
Dysdiadochocinesia (Impairment of Coordination)
EOM (Extra Occular Movement)
Extensor (Muscle that Extends a Joint)
Flaccid (Weak, Lax, and Soft)
Flexor (Muscle that Flexes a Joint)
F.N. (finger/nose)
Fundi (Bottom Part of Sac)
Hematoma (Localized Mass of Clotted Blood)
Hemihypesthesia (Decreased Sensation on One Side of Body)
Hemiparesis (Partial Paralysis on One Side of Body)
Hemiplegia (Paralysis on One Side of Body)
K.H.T. (knee/heel/toe)
K.J. (knee jerk)
Lac (Laceration)
Midline (Central Brain Location)
Morbidity (Prevalence of Disease)
Morphine (Anti-Pain Narcotic)
n.a.d. (No Abnormality Detected or No Appreciable Disease)
Nystagmus (Nodding or Oscillation)
Occipital (Back or Hinder Part of Brain)
Papillaedemar (Optic Nerve Swelling)
Parietal (Pair of Bones, Forming Part of Sides & Top of Skull)
Pineal (Body Situated behind 3rd Ventricle of the Brain)
Plantar (Pertaining to Sole of Foot)
PMI (Point of Maximal Impulse)
POP (Plaster of Paris)
PP (Pin Prick)
Primary Union (Post-operative Healing)
PTA (Post Traumatic Amnesia)
Pterion (Anchor Point of Brain Bones)
RA (Retrograde Amnesia)
Retrograde (Formerly or Backwards in Time)
Sella Turcica (Central Part of Brain)
Sequellae (Morbid Condition Resulting from Previous Disease or Injury)
Squamous (Scalelike Feather or Bone Part)
Staphylococcus (Pus-Producing Bacteria)
Strabismus (Cross-Eyed or Squinting)
Sulpha Drugs (Pre-Penicillin Antibiotics)
Trapezius (Back of Neck Muscles)
Trauma (State of Shock or Morbid Condition)
Turcica (see Sella Turcica)

R[☙] E[☙] N



Snapshots and Scraps

"TENDER BEHIND"

Noticing a seaboat being towed by an inbound destroyer, the duty signalman on the harbour gate-vessel flashed out the following question to the warship:

"Did you know that you have a tender behind?"

The following pages contain a random sampling of the cargo found stowed aboard the tender.

UNITED - WE - CONQUER

IN-MEMORY-OF
THE-OFFICERS-AND
MEN-OF
THE-COMMANDOS
WHO-DIED-IN-THE
SECOND-WORLD-WAR
1939-1945
THIS-COUNTRY-WAS
THEIR-TRAINING
GROUND

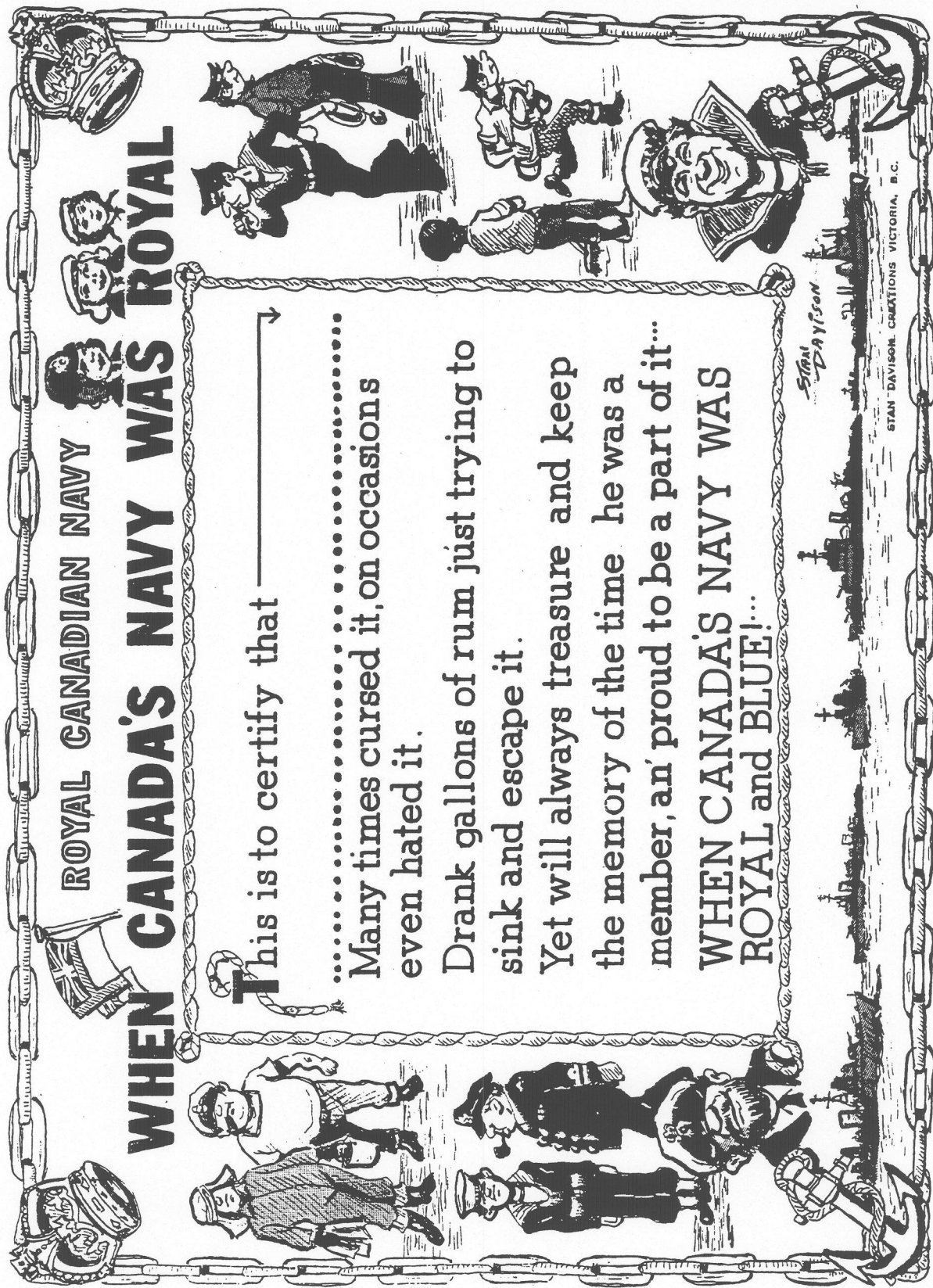


Erected in 1952 and unveiled two years later by the Queen Mother, the design by Dundee sculptor Scott Sutherland, ARSA, was selected by WW II commando Lord Lovat from two dozen submissions. Its three life-size bronze figures, in battle order with rifles slung, stand atop a nine-foot high granite plinth and gaze out across the countryside with Ben Nevis in the distant background. The memorial is located on top of a ridge near Spean Bridge, Inverness-shire.



"Too much flotsam and not enough jetsam."

Try Our Recipe



ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY

WHEN CANADA'S NAVY WAS ROYAL

This is to certify that —————→

.....
Many times cursed it, on occasions
even hated it.

Drank gallons of rum just trying to
sink and escape it.
Yet will always treasure and keep
the memory of the time he was a
member, an' proud to be a part of it...
**WHEN CANADA'S NAVY WAS
ROYAL and BLUE!**

Stan
DAVIS

STAN DAVISON CREATIONS VICTORIA, B.C.

COPYRIGHT STAN DAVISON, VICTORIA, B.C.



7 1939

WHEN CANADA'S NAVY WAS ROYAL & BLUE
THE SHIPS, THE PEOPLE, THE SONGS OF W-W II

1945



A NOSTALGIA MUSICAL SALUTE TO OUR NAVY.



By the barrack gate
darling I remember how
you used to
wait.

Drinking Rum and Coca Cola.



We'll rant and we'll roar
like true Newfoundlanders



Roll out the barrel...



AWAY AWAY WITH TIF AND DRUM



The sirens are blowing there's
going to be a raid, take a tip and
stay clear of the...



Oh Danny Boy...



When the lights go on again
all over the world.

AIR RAID SHELTER



There will be blue birds over...
The white cliffs
of Dover.

Roll me over in the clover



Wish me luck as you wave
me goodbye....



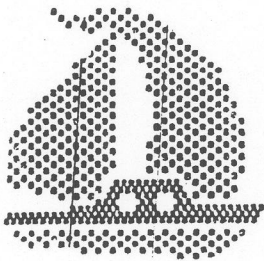


German propaganda / Propagande allemande

THE SAILOR'S PSALM

"They that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters; these men see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. For at His word the stormy wind ariseth which lifteth up the waves thereof. They are carried up to heaven, and down again to the deep; their soul melteth away because of the trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end."

"So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, He delivereth them out of their distress. For he maketh the storm to cease so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they are at rest; and so He bringeth them unto the haven where they would be."



THE NAVAL PRAYER



CORNWALL, ONT.

"O Eternal Lord God, who alone spreadest the heavens and ruleth the raging of the sea; who has compassed the waters with bounds until day and night come to an end; be pleased to receive into thy Almighty and most gracious protection the persons of us thy servants, and the fleet in which we serve. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea, and from the violence of the enemy, that we may be a safeguard unto our most gracious Sovereign Lady; Queen Elizabeth, and her Dominions, and a security for such as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasions; that the inhabitants of our Commonwealth, may in peace and quietness serve thee our God; and that we may return in safety to enjoy the blessings of the land, with the fruits of our labours, and with a thankful remembrance of thy mercies to praise and glorify thy Holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN."

1667 ~ Navy Rum ~ 1970

At ten to twelve each forenoon
Since the Navy first began
Jack drinks the health of Nelson
From Iutland to Japan.

He's always done his duty —
To country and the throne
And all he asks in fairness —
Is to leave his tot alone.

Requiem.

You soothed my nerves
and warmed my limbs
And cheered my dismal heart
Procured my wants, obliged my whims
And now its time to part.

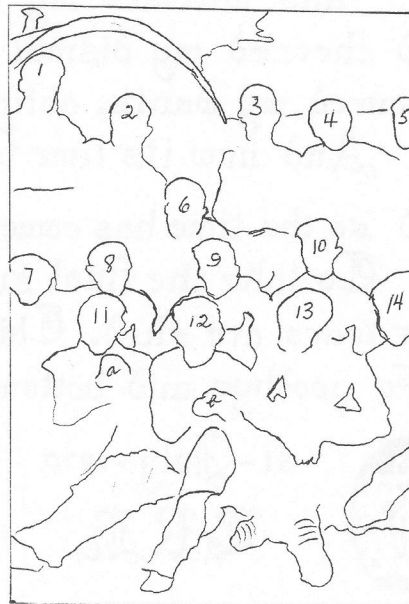
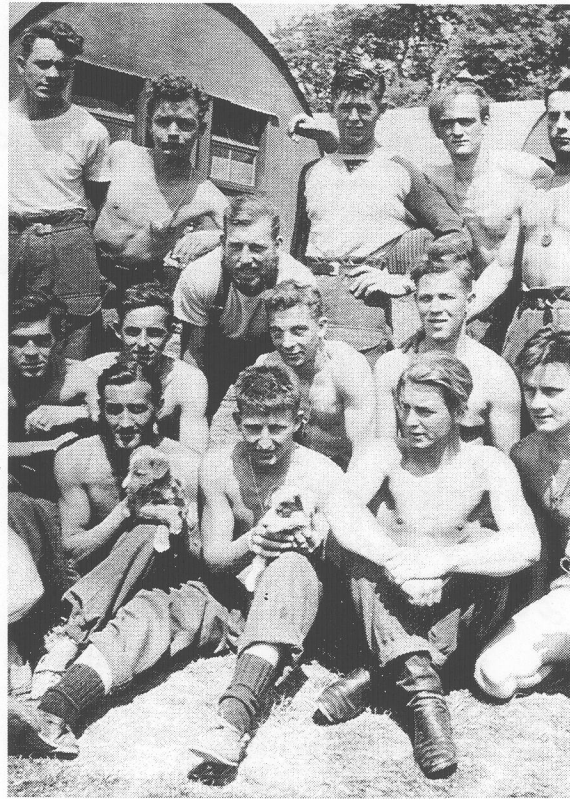
And so the time has come old friend
To take the final sup
Our tears are shed. This is the end
So goodbye and bottoms up.



31. ~ July ~ 1970.

L.R.H.

RCN Beach Commando W-1 at Cowes, Isle of Wight
HMS Vectis (Pines Camp), May 1944



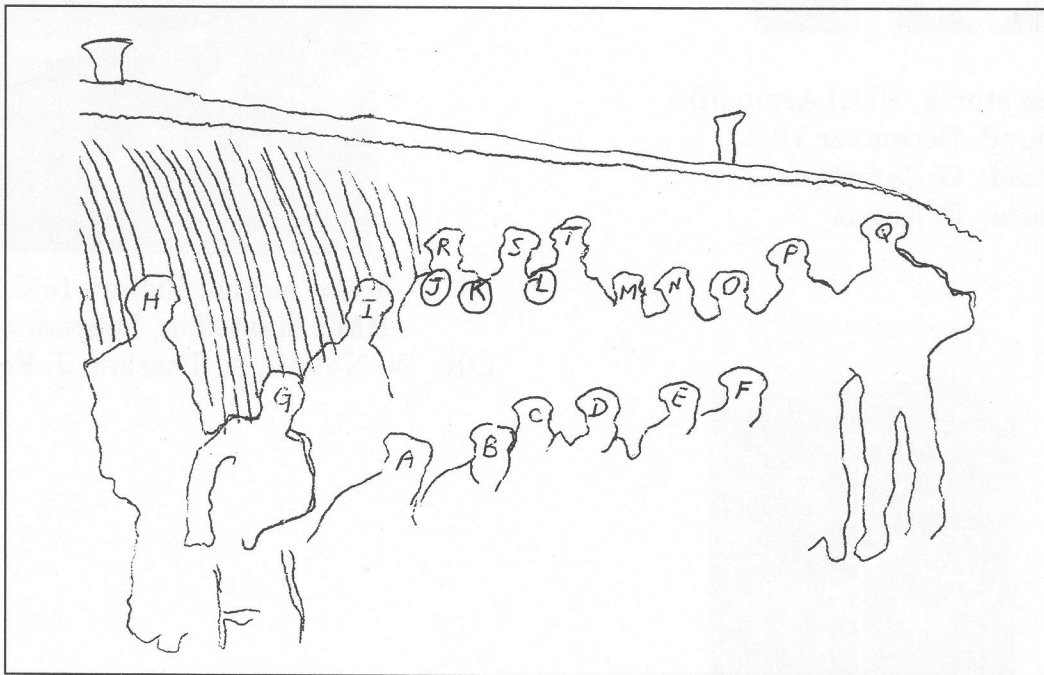
1. Crough, R.
2. Newell, W.
3. Platjouw, J.
4. Therien, A.
5. Smiley, D.

6. Casbourne, J.
7. Steel, H.
8. Allen, J.
9. Pendlebury, A.
14. Watkins, I.

10. Stone, G.
11. Burse, R.
12. Smith, H.D.
13. (unidentified)

a & b -- puppies

RCN Beach Commando W-1 at Ardentinny, Scotland
HMS Armadillo, Winter 1943-44



A. Pendlebury, A.
B. *
C. Watkins, I.
D. Fox, J.
E. Joyce, J.
F. Reade, J.
G. Therien, A.

H. Sutherland, D.M.
I. *
J. Burse, R.
K. Albrechtson, F.
L. *
M. Sutherland, J.

N. Smiley, D.
O. Jarrett, G.
P. Crowhust, K.
Q. Finley, G.
R. *
S. Smith, R.E.
T. Hildreth, C.

*unidentified



(Left to Right)
standing: F. Albrechtson, H. Smith, J. Read
on bench: G. Vilneff, R. Crough, A. Pendlebury
on ground: D. Warren

Hove, Sussex, April 1944



Unloading stores, HMS Armadillo
Scotland, December 1943
Left foreground: G. Jarrett
Back to camera: F. Angus



Route march, Exbury to Calshot
HMS Mastodon, February 1944
L/R: W. Newell, A. Therien, J. Fox, D. Smiley



RCN Beach Commando "W"
Sardine-packed in an LCM
HMS Armadillo, Scotland
December 1943



CERTIFICATE FOR WOUNDS AND HURTS

These are to Certify the Right Honourable
the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that

(Name in full) (Rank or Rating) (Official Number)
GAMBLIN, Fredrick O'Sea V. 59176

belonging to His Majesty's Ship "Lizard".
was injured on 8-4-1914 as shown on
the reverse hereof.

Injured or
"Wounded"

and that I/we, having enquired into the circumstances
in which he received the[†] stated, and having
heard the evidence of

†Injury or
"Wound."

(Insert Name and Rank or Rating)

who witnessed the accident, consider that he was then
actually On His Majesty's Service in H.M.S. LIZARD

Here describe
the manner in
which the injury
was received
and also the
particular act
of duty or form
of physical
recreation in
which it was
incurred as
required by
Article 1419
of the King's
Regulations.

O'Sea. Gamblin was present in a class
under instruction, when myself R.L. Shale LT. RCNVR
and two leading hands were present. US TR. HARRY.
US D. MCINTYRE
Gamblin had climbed a rope scaling ladder
and was endeavouring to cross a log at the top
when he accidentally let go and fell to the
ground. His fall hurt his wrist and it was
reported to me immediately after.
He was on duty at the time

Delete when
case is
investigated
by Captain.

Signatures and Ranks of
Investigating Officers.

R.L. Shale LT. RCNVR.

Signature of Officer
or Man injured.

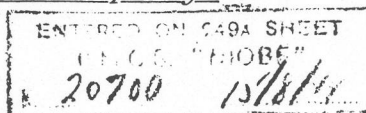
F. Gamblin

Date 19

Signature of Captain

H.M.S.

NOTE: The grant of H. A. Certificate to a Petty Officer or Man is to be noted on his Service
Certificate and in the Ships Ledger.



Report of Wound or Hurt.

(Name in full)

(Rank or Rating)

(Official Number)

GAMBLIN, Frederick

O'Sea

59716
V. 59146

Injury or Wound

belonging to His Majesty's Ship "Lizard"
sustained the following Injury on 8th April 1944
Fracture ~~of~~ Scaphoid bone. L.T. Wrist. No
displacement.

Here describe minutely the nature of the injury sustained as required by Article 1419 of the King's Regulations

Personal Description.

Age about 19 years. Born at or near Sussex N.B.
Height 5 ft 9 ins. Hair ~~black~~ Eyes ~~blue~~ Complexion ~~fair~~

Particular Marks or Scars.

scar on right leg

Date 12. 4. 1944

Signature of Medical Officer.

J. Leeson
Surgeon Commander, R.N.V.R.

To be completed if Hurt Certificate (overleaf) is NOT awarded.

Officer or Man

Injury or Wound

I/we, having enquired into the circumstances in which the above named sustained the [†] stated, and having heard the evidence of (Insert Name and Rank or Rating)

who witnessed the accident, consider that he was not at the time On His Majesty's Service.

Delete when case is investigated by Captain.

Signatures and Ranks of Investigating Officers.

Signature of Officer or Man injured.

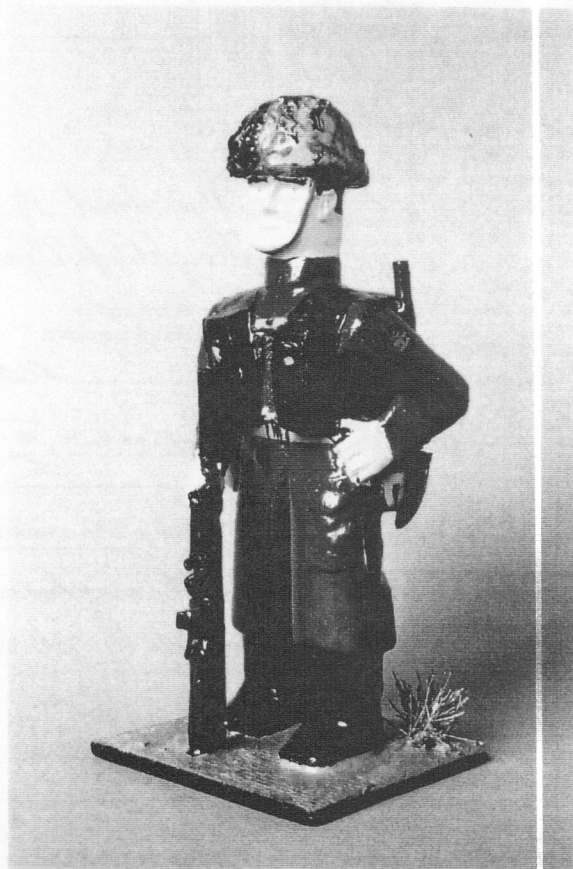
Date 19

Signature of Captain in

H.M.S.

WOOD SCULPTURES
(5 x 2 x 2)

by Ivor Watkins, 1992



from OD Deck Swabber to AB Beach Commando

Ivor Watkins



Bowman canoeist

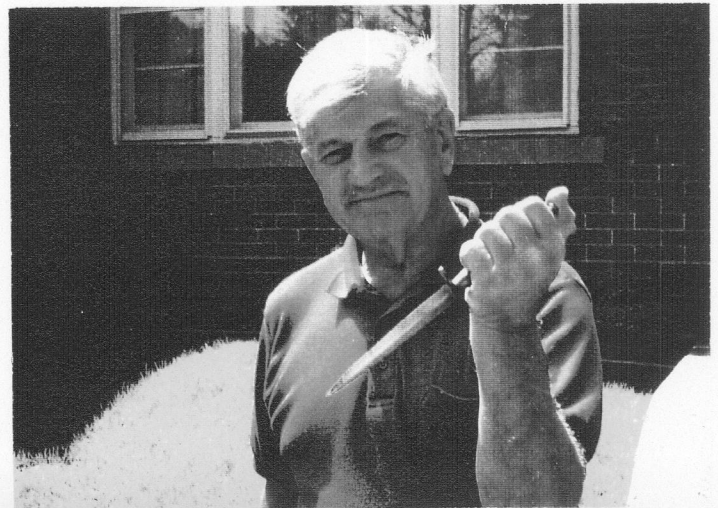
Above:

Visiting the author at Indian Lake,
north of Ottawa, summer 1993

Left:

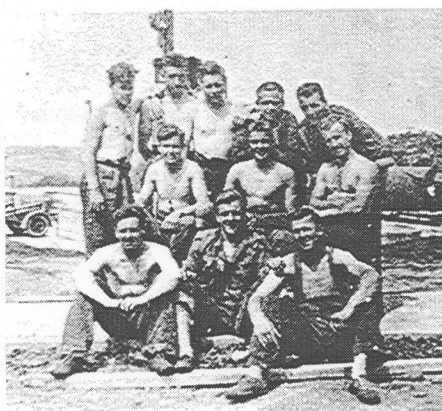
On a day off near Portuguese Cove, N.S.,
summer 1943, several months prior to
being drafted to beach commandos

Displaying his Fairbairn -Sykes
commando dagger outside his home,
Pointe Claire, P.Q., May 1992



HMS Armadillo, Ardentinny, Scotland, November 1943

"The Group of Eleven"



(Left to Right)

back row: J. Ross, A. Watt, R. Nelson,
D. Kroshewsky, C. Luff

middle row: J. Offless, A. Petty, W. Murphy

front row: J. White, J. Adams, D. Trewin

Reg Burse documents



National Archives
of Canada

Archives nationales
du Canada

Canada

STATEMENT OF SERVICE in the CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

Name: Reginald Clarence BURSE

Service Rank or Number: V-48280

Branch of Service: Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve

Date and Place of Birth: 19 August 1922 Burlington, Ont.

**Date and Place of Appointment,
Enlistment or Enrolment:** 25 September 1942 Hamilton, Ont.

Theatres of Service: Canada, Britain, on the High Seas and Northwest Europe

**Date and Place of Retirement
or Discharge:** 4 September 1945 Hamilton, Ont.

Type of Retirement or Discharge: Honourable

Rank on Retirement or Discharge: Able Seaman

Medals and Decorations: France and Germany Star, Defence Medal,
Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp and
War Medal 1939-45

Remarks: On divisional strength from 25 September 1942
to 25 October 1942

5 June 1992

Date

David Francis
Director, Personnel Records Centre



OCT 23 1942
 JUL - 7 1943
 CANADA
 Can. B. 207
 100M-3-42 (3733)
 N.S. 815-2-207

Certificate of Medical Examination of Officers, Men and Boys NAVAL SERVICE OF CANADA (R.C.N. OR RESERVE FORCES)

Note—This Certificate is to be completed by the Examining Medical Officer and forwarded to the Naval Secretary, Department of National Defence, Ottawa.

I, the undersigned, have examined Reginald C. Bense
 candidate for entry as 2/P
 and I believe him to be in all respects fit for His Majesty's Service
unfit for His Majesty's Service for the reason stated below } He has signed the Certificate
 given below in my presence.
 *Strike out if inapplicable *Delete one.

This examination has been made in accordance with the current Instructions as to Medical Standards.

(a) Age	Yrs. 20	Mos. 1	(j) Date of last Vaccination for Smallpox	1940	
(b) Height with bare feet	Feet 5	In. 8	(k) General Development	Good	
(c) Weight without clothes	132		(l) Nose, Throat and Tonsils	T.O.	
(d) Ears and Hearing	N		(m) Heart and Lungs	N	
(e) Chest Girth	Max. 36	Min. 32 1/2	Mean 34 1/2	(n) Abdomen Hernia, etc.	N
(f) Teeth	Deficient 5	Defective 3	Dentures -	(o) Limbs and Joints	as per plan both
(g) Vision by Snellens Types	without glasses	Rt. 6	Lt. 6	(p) Skin	Clear
	with glasses where worn	Rt.	Lt.	(q) Anus Haemorrhoids	N
(h) Colour Vision	Ishihara	normal		(r) Testes Varicocele	N
	R.C.N. Lantern			(s) Urine	as per 24/42
(i) Chest x-ray	not taken approved positive doubtful				

CERTIFICATE TO BE SIGNED BY CANDIDATE

I hereby certify that to the best of my belief I have never suffered from Fits, †Incontinence of Urine, Discharge from the Ears, or any other disease likely to render me unfit for His Majesty's Service. ‡I am willing to undergo, after entry, such dental treatment, vaccination, or inoculations as may be authorized.

*The exact meaning of this is to be clearly explained to the Candidate by the Examining Medical Officer.
 †Delete one. Signature of Candidate

When a Candidate is subject to a defect or disability, the following information is to be inserted:

This Candidate is the subject of _____

 *which renders him medically unfit for service,
 †not considered of sufficient importance to cause his rejection, he being desirable in other respects.
 ‡Delete one

IF REJECTED insert here UNFIT in block letters

Dated at 1942 the 22 of August 1942
Am. Pan
 Examining Medical Officer
 (Rank) Surgeon

4625065

Can. B. 207B
150M-445 (1646)
N.S. 7570-B207B

CERTIFICATE OF MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF OFFICERS, MEN AND BOYS, NAVAL SERVICE OF CANADA, ON DISCHARGE

(R.C.N. or Reserve Forces)

NOTE.—This Certificate is to be completed by the Examining Medical Officer and forwarded to the Secretary of
The Naval Board, Department of National Defence, Ottawa

I, the undersigned, have examined BURSE R.C.A. A.B. V 48280
(Name, rating, Official No.)
on discharge from the Royal Canadian Naval Service.

This examination has been made in accordance with the current Instructions as to Medical Standards.

(a) Age	Yrs. 22	Mos. 11	(j) Date of last Vaccination for Smallpox	1942
(b) Height with bare feet	Feet 5	In. 7 1/4	(k) General Development	good
(c) Weight without clothes	139		(l) Nose, Throat and Tonsils	normal
(d) Ears and Hearing	normal		(m) Heart and Lungs	120-76 normal
(e) Chest Girth	Max. 37	Min. 34	Mean 35 1/2	(n) Abdomen slight laxness in ring. Hernia, et right
(f) Teeth	Deficient 6	Defective	Dentures	(o) Limbs and Joints normal
(g) Vision by Snellens Types	without glasses 20-20	Rt. Lt.	20-30	(p) Skin normal
	with glasses where worn	Rt.	Lt.	(q) Anus Haemorrhoids normal
(h) Colour Vision	Ishihara R.C.N. Lantern	normal		(r) Testes Varicocele normal
(i) Chest x-ray	(approved) XXXX D	3222	(s) Urine sug. alb.	neg.

mazzini neg.

CERTIFICATE TO BE SIGNED BY CANDIDATE

I hereby certify that I have been fully examined (unclothed), that the findings have been read to me, that I am satisfied with the thoroughness of this examination, and that I do not claim to suffer from any disability due to or aggravated by service.

R. G. B. B. B.
Signature of Candidate

(N.B.—When the officer or rating is subject to a defect not already noted on his Medical Form Can. B.207 on entry, Medical Board of Survey Form C.N.M. 227 will be required.)

Dated at HALIFAX the 14 of July 1945

[Signature]
Examining Medical Officer

(Rank)

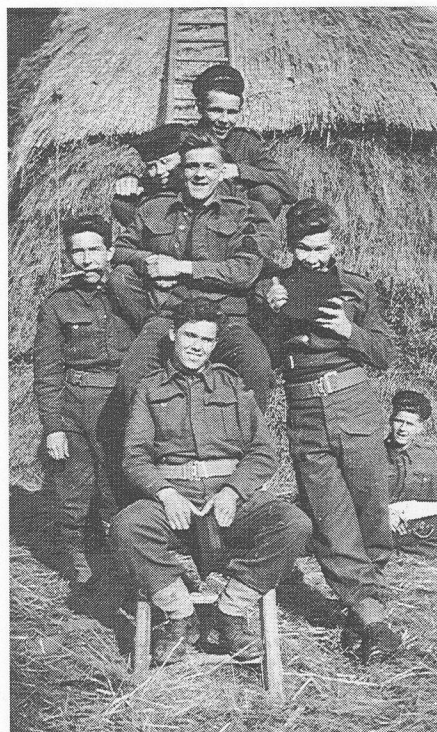
Accepted to Sea 19/7/45

30

From Russ Nelson's Rogues Gallery



Russ at Kew Gardens, Surrey, 1943



D. McIntyre, J. Adams & J. Offless
are identifiable in this "Group of Seven"
HMS Mastodon, Exbury, March 1944



L/R: J. Adams, J. White, V. Downey
Lymington, Hants, May 1944



L/R: R. Nelson, J. Adams, D. Kennedy,
W. Burden, A. Petty
Lymington, Hants, May 1944



L/R: J. Adams, W. Murphy, J. Forsyth
Lymington, Hants, May 1944

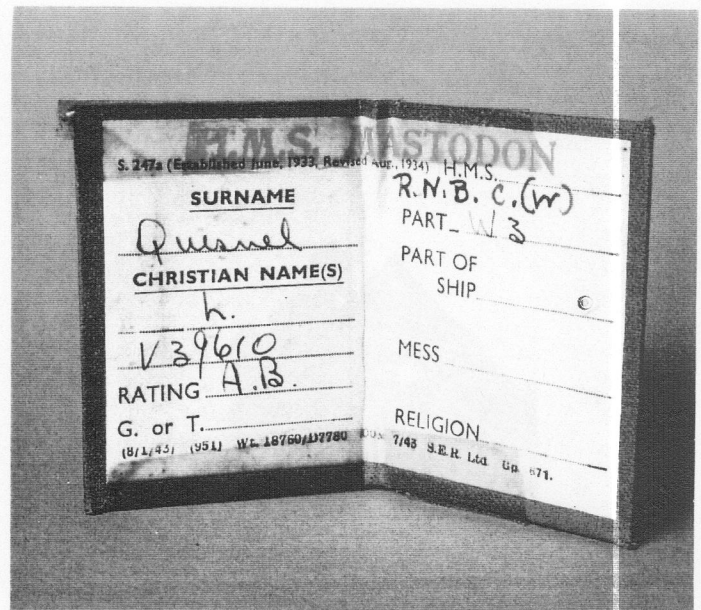
From Lucien Quesnel's Archives



Outside his Montreal home,
Winter 1944-45



Barbering A. Germaine,
HMS Vectis (Pines Camp),
Cowes, Isle of Wight, May 1944



Lucien's Passbook, HMS Mastodon,
(Exbury, Hants, March 1944)

Name *Wesley, James Robert*Rank or Rating *O B*Date of Birth *Aug 4 1923*Official No. *439610*Ship's Book No. *52/113*Pay Book Issued by *Wesley*Ship *USS WHEATON*Date *11 8 NOV 1943*Signature of Holder *Wesley*

NAVAL PAY AND IDENTITY BOOK

Instructions.

1. This book must be carefully preserved. You must not lose it or allow it to be stolen. If it is stolen or lost, the facts should be reported to the Commanding Officer as soon as possible. Disciplinary action will be taken if the loss is shown to be due to negligence.

2. You will produce this book whenever you require an advance of cash on account, or when instructed to do so by any person authorized by law to ask you to produce it. In the case of ratings this book is an Identity Book and it is therefore essential that it shall always be carried on the person when on shore, and it should also be carried on board whenever the work and dress in which you are employed permits. It must not be kept in a kit bag or respirator haversack.

3. You will give a receipt to the Officer paying you, for all cash advances made to you. The Officer making the payment will sign the corresponding entry in this book on the page for Cash payments.

4. You will make no entries in this book, except to sign your name on page opposite. It is a disciplinary offence for the holder to make any alterations or erasures in this book, or to mutilate it in any way.

5. This book should not be allowed to fall into the hands of the enemy or unauthorized persons or strangers. You are personally responsible for its safe keeping.

6. The book is to be surrendered when the bearer leaves the naval service.

DAILY RATES

Promotions, Advancements, Reductions

RATES OF DAILY PAY	Deduct Allotment Weekly	Net Rate to be issued Weekly.		Date from which NET RATE OF PAY is issuable.
		Figures.	Words.	

In Identification purpose only
No Pay Documents received
8 Nov 44

1.85 *15* *43* *forty three* *31-1-44*

20 *Twenty* *29.60*

8.40 *Nine* *Sixty Cents* *INCLUDES K.U.A. - ADD 1/6 WHEN "T"*

C.O.S.B. No. TO BE QUOTED ALWAYS

OF PAY.

Appointments and Alterations in Allotment.

*Reason for changes in Net Rate (e.g., Promotions, Advancements, Reductions, Alterations in Allotments, &c.).

Officer's Signature, Ship or establishment, and Date.

Wesley, James R.C.N.

7 Nov 43 *Sub 1/14* *REAR*

REASON FOR CHANGES

2 6-12-5 1/2 months

REAR

* When making an entry in this column, the Officer making the entry should complete the next line of page 2 so as to show the amended particulars.

Date	By whom Paid or Paying Authority	Amount. (State currency)	Signature of Officer.
Total from last page...			
15-6-44	Veelie	6-0-0	F. Angus
28/6/44	Veelie	3-10-0	F. Angus
9/7/44	Veelie	10-0-0	F. Angus
22/8/44	W. M. Subward	2-10-0	F. Angus
Total Cash Payments to date...			
Total Cash Payments to date...			

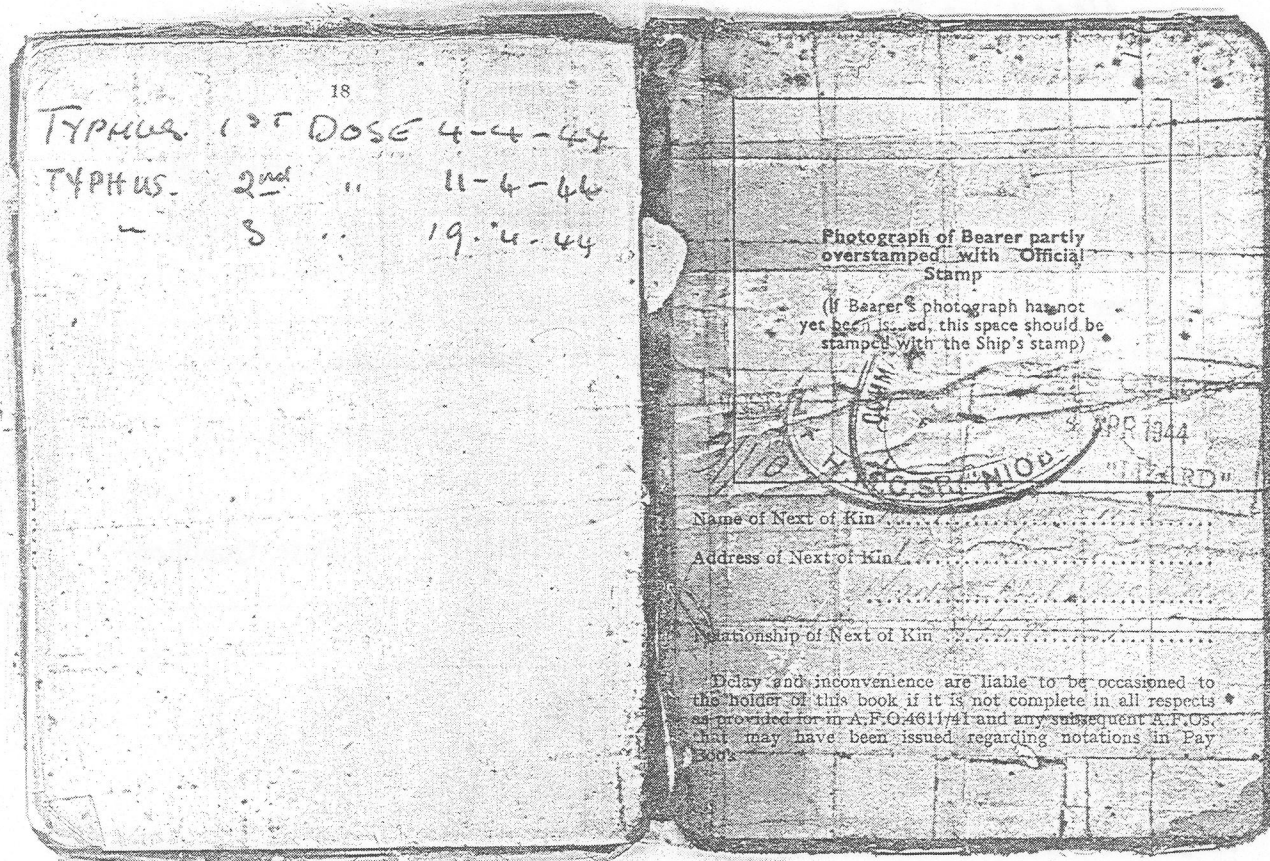
Date	By whom Paid or Paying Authority	Amount. (State currency) £ s	Signature of Officer.
Total from last page...			
3-12-43	"ARMADILLO"	1-10	
17-12-43	"ARMADILLO"	25-	
7-1-44	"ARMADILLO"	1-	
13-1-44	"ARMADILLO"	3-10	F. Angus Sub Lt RENVK
28-1-44	Armado	1-10	F. Angus S/Lt
3-2-44	Armado	7-18	F. Angus S/Lt
12-2-44	"ARMADILLO"	3-6	F. Angus S/Lt
24-2-44	"ARMADILLO"	4-4	Match West
28-2-44	Match West	2-	F. Angus
10/3/44	Match West	12-0-0	Pharmacoth. Lint
29-3-44	254622	10/-	86 Office for Extra
6-4-44	Lizard	4-40	F. Angus Lt
20-4-44	"	4-0-0	F. Angus Lt
4-5-44	"	4-0-0	F. Angus Lt
19-5-44	"	10-0-0	F. Angus Lt
1-6-44	Veelie	3-10-0	F. Angus Lt
Total Cash Payments to date...			

Leave granted for periods exceeding 48 hours
and free travel warrants issued.

From	To	No. of Days.	Warrant No.

Issues of gratuitous or Loan Clothing.

[illegible]



Extracts from his Naval Pay and Identity Book

C.N.S. 264 (S. 264)

75M-5-42 (4758)

N.S. 815-9-264

To: Stadacona 30/11/42
A/S July 15/42

Photo
Name..... Joseph Louis Robert Lucien QUESNEL.....
Sub-Rating and Seniority *0/smn 18/6/42* Non-Sub.....
O.N. V-39610..... S.B. No..... W.B. No.....
Joined Ship *Sept 22/42* from *H.M.C.S. Cartier*
Engagement: Period 18th June, 1942 Expires *Duration*
Date of Birth 19th August, 1924 Religion R. C.
Character *V.G.* Efficiency *SAT* Date *30/11/42*
Badges *1/2* Class for Conduct *1st* Class for Leave *1st*

Date due for: Next Badge.....
Progressive Pay.....
L.S. & G.C. Recommended.....

Advancement. Wishes to Pass? Recommended? Date Qualified?
Educ. Test Pt.1.....
Higher Educ. Test.....
Professional or
higher Sub-rating.....
do Non-Sub.....

(For ordinary Seamen Form T.S.34 (S.536D) must be used in addition).

Any Non-Service Attainments *weaver*
P.P.T. "fair" 23/9/42
Swimming Qualification *Good* *PPT 4/8/42*
Athletic capabilities *boxing, softball, hockey.*

General Remarks (including intelligence, energy, initiative, powers of command). *(I.Q. 98 - Average)*

Learns well, works well, an average rating who should do well.

H.M.C.S. "CARTIER".....
Date 11th September, 1942
Maurice Gagnon
Officer of Division.
Lieutenant R.C.N.V.R.

- Notes:—(1) This form is to be kept for each rating by the Officer of his Division.
(2) The form is to be completed to date, and signed by the Officer of the Division before the rating changes his Division or Ship.
(3) On a rating changing his Ship or Establishment, Form S.264 is to be transferred with his other papers for the information of the next Officer of Division.

P.T.O.

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE
NAVY ARMY AIR FORCE
STATEMENT OF WAR SERVICE GRATUITY

NAME **Joseph Louis Robert Lucien QUESNEL**
 (CHRISTIAN NAMES) (SURNAME)
 ADDRESS **5301 Garnier St.,
 Montreal, Que.**

REGISTER NO. **65391**
 FILE NO. **NS V39610**
 DATE **21 Nov./45**
 SERVICE NO. **V-39610**
 FINAL RANK OR RATING **A/A.B.**
 DATE OF DISCHARGE **23 Aug./45**

DATE OF TERMINATION OF OVERSEAS SERVICE **24 July/45**

A. TOTAL QUALIFYING SERVICE

NO. OF DAYS **1136** EQUAL TO **37** COMPLETE PERIODS AT \$7.50 **\$ 277.50**

B. QUALIFYING OVERSEAS SERVICE

NO. OF DAYS **473** LESS **Nil** INELIGIBLE DAYS, EQUAL TO **473** DAYS @ 25c. PER DAY **\$ 118.25**
 SEE PAR. 2 OVERLEAF FOR EXPLANATION

SUB TOTAL \$ 395.75

C. SUPPLEMENT FOR OVERSEAS SERVICE

DAILY RATES AT DISCHARGE

PAY	\$ 1.85	
SUBSISTENCE OR LODGING AND PROVISION ALLOWANCE	\$ 1.25	
ADDITIONAL PAY	HLM	\$.13
DEPENDENTS' ALLOWANCE 1/30 OF \$	Nil	\$ --
TOTAL	\$ 3.23	X 7 = \$ 22.61
NO. OF DAYS	473	X \$ 22.61 = \$ 58.44

D. WAR SERVICE GRATUITY

\$ 454.19

E. DEDUCTIONS

OVERPAYMENT OF

PAY AND ALLOWANCES \$

OTHER DEDUCTIONS

\$ Nil

F. AMOUNT PAYABLE

(THIS AMOUNT IS PAYABLE IN **5** MONTHLY INSTALMENTS OF \$ **90.83** EACH) **\$ 454.19**

THE WAR SERVICE GRANTS ACT, 1944, PROVIDES FOR YOUR RE-ESTABLISHMENT CREDIT IN THE AMOUNT SHOWN IN SUB TOTAL OF A. & B. THIS CREDIT IS AVAILABLE TO YOU IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES. INQUIRY IN THIS CONNECTION SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS.

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR EXPLANATION OF ITEMS A, B & C

G. MONTHLY INSTALMENT NOT TO EXCEED AND

TE OF PAY **3.23** WANCES \$ **96.90** X30

INSTALM. PAYABLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
AMOUNT	90.83	90.83	90.83	90.83	90.83				
CHEQUE No.									
DATE									

INSTALM. PAYABLE	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
AMOUNT									
CHEQUE No.									
DATE									

CERTIFICATE I CERTIFY THAT THE AMOUNT HAS BEEN CORRECTLY COMPUTED AND IS PAYABLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF THE WAR SERVICE GRANTS ACT, 1944 AND THE REGULATIONS ISSUED THEREUNDER.

PREPARED BY **LJM** CHECKED BY **11**

TREASURY
 CHECKED BY **[Signature]** DATE **[Signature]**

for Dir Naval Pay Acctg. SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

CERTIFICATE of the SERVICE of

Joseph Louis Robert Lucien QUESNEL
in the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve

Training Headquarters <i>R.C.N.B. Halifax, N.S.</i>	R.C.N.V.R. Division <i>R.M.C. St. Catharines</i>	Official Number <i>V-39618</i>
--	---	-----------------------------------

Date of Birth <i>19th August 1924</i>	Name and Address of Nearest Relative or Friend (In pencil) <i>Mother: MIGNONE 1797 St. Christopher St. Montreal, Que.</i>
Place of Birth <i>Montreal, Quebec</i>	
Place of Residence <i>5301 GARNIER ST., MONTREAL</i>	
Trade brought up to <i>Weaver</i> O.H.F.	
Religion <i>Roman Catholic</i>	
Can Swim:—P.P.T. <i>Yes</i> Date <i>23rd Sept 1942</i> Signature <i>[Signature]</i> Rank <i>Lt</i>	
P.S.T. : Date <i>19</i> Signature <i>[Signature]</i> Rank <i>[Blank]</i>	

PARTICULARS OF SERVICE				MEDALS, DECORATIONS, etc.		
Date of Actual Volunteering	Date of Enrolment or re-enrolment	Period Volunteered for	Rating on Enrolment or Re-enrolment	Date of		Nature of Decoration
				Award	Presentation	
<i>11 June '42</i>	<i>18 June '42</i>	<i>18 months</i>	<i>Ord. 1st</i>			

PERSONAL DESCRIPTION							
On Entry	Height		Chest (mean)	Weight	Hair	Eyes	Complexion
	Feet	Inches					
	<i>5</i>	<i>3 1/4</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>107 1/2</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Medium</i>
On re-enrolment—6 years' Service							
On re-enrolment—12 years' Service							
Further Description if necessary							

TRANSFER BETWEEN DIVISIONS			TRANSFER—LISTS A AND B		
From	To	Date	List	Date	Authority

NAVAL TRAINING and ACTIVE SERVICE

Year	SHIP OR ESTABLISHMENT	NON-SUB. RATE	RATING	FROM	TO	CAUSE OF DISCHARGE
1942	H.M.C.S. "Carter"			Ord. Serv. 16 June '42	14 July '42	
				On Active Service	15 July '42	
1942	H.M.C.S. "Carter"			Ord. Serv. 15 July '42	21 Sep '42	Discharged
1942	H.M.C.S. "Cornwallis"			Ord. Serv. 22 Sep '42	20 Nov	Demobilized
-11-	-11- (Clary)		-11-	21 Nov	27 Nov	Reference
-11-	Cornwallis		-11-	28 Nov	30 Nov '42	R.C.M. 17, pot
	Stadacona		-11-	1 Nov '42	27 Nov '42	ITC H.40.517 of
	Cornwallis		-11-	28 Nov '42	30 Nov '42	25 July '45
	Stadacona		-11-	1 Dec '42	6 Feb '43	
	Stadacona (Humpy)		-11-	7 July '43	15 July '43	Rehabilitation
	Stadacona (Humpy)		A.B.	15 July '43	5 Oct '43	Grant
	Stadacona		"	6 Oct '43	11 Oct '43	
	Nishe		"	20 Oct '43	6 Nov '43	Plain clothes
	N.M.S. Armadillo		-11-	27 Nov '43	16 Feb '44	Activity 100.00
	H.M.S. Mastadon		-11-	17 Jan '44	16 Feb '44	
	H.C.T.C. JUNO		-11-	17 July '44	2 Apr '44	
	Ren B.C.W. Lizard		-11-	2 Apr '44	27 June '44	
	Ren B.C.W. Vostin		-11-	28 June '44	6 July '44	
	Juno Area (France)		-11-	7 July '44	2 Aug '44	
	Ren B.C.W. (Vostin)		-11-	29 Aug '44	29 Aug '44	
	Nishe		-11-	30 Aug '44	10 Sep '44	
	Stadacona		-11-	11 Sep '44	30 Sep '44	
	Penguin		-11-	1 Oct '44	29 Oct '44	

Wounds Received in Action, Hurt Certificates, Meritorious Service, Special Recommendations, Prizes or other Grants

[illegible]

Normandy, Juno Sector, Nan Beach
Bernières-sur-Mer, July 27, 1990
Skip and daughter Linda

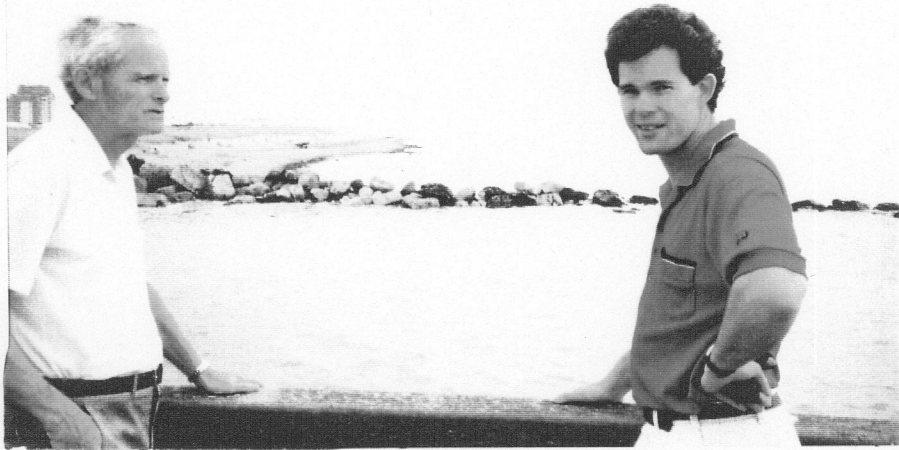


Outside reconstructed former German fort
used as shelter by "W" Beach Commando
Summer 1994



Strolling westward along the beach

Skip and son Gerald, July 27, 1990



The memorial on Nan Beach near Bernières-sur-Mer commemorating the June 6 1944 Allied landings in Normandy which led to the liberation of Europe



Juno Sector, Mike Beach, Courseulles-sur-Mer

LEST WE FORGET



CANADIAN MILITARY CEMETERY, BENY-SUR-MER, NORMANDY
2,049 headstones mark graves of mainly
Third Infantry Division and also 15 airmen

Book of Honour
gives name on and location of
each headstone



SERGEANT W. LA HAISE, C.12353
ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY SERVICE
CORPS
OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA
2ND JULY 1944 ----- AGE 27

**An illustrated account of a
unique World War II
Canadian naval unit.**

Part I, based on official Canadian archival records, chronicles its October 1943 formation, eight months training in Scotland, and seven week stint, as part of Operation NEPTUNE, on Juno Sector's Normandy beaches.

Part II, presented in the form of eleven anecdotal "PORTHOLES" related by members of the unit, spins a series of unofficial, off-the-record yarns.